00060473

BOMBAY BRANCH

OF THE

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.

TOWN HALL, BOMBAY.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 02 July, 2018

LETTERS FROM ABROAD

60473

BY

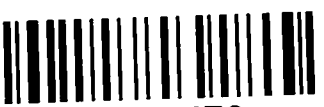
HENRY ALFORD, D.D

DEAN OF CANTERBURY

ALEXANDER STRAHAN, LONDON

DEIGHTON, BELL AND CO., CAMBRIDGE

1865


00060473

CONTENTS.

I.

THE RIVIERE.

PAGE

Approach to Nice—A Day at Nice—Nice to Mentone—Monaco—Sunday at Mentone—The Corniche Road—The Kingdom of Italy—Coast-towns in North Italy—Alassio—The Riviera di Levante—Bay of Spezia—Defence of Railways - - - - - - - - 1

II.

'TOWARDS ROME.'

Defects of Photography—Arrival at Pisa—'Orcagna's Triumph of Death'—The Campo Santo—The Duomo at Siena—The Duomo at Orvieto—The Papal Frontier—'La Cupola!'—The Porta del Popolo—The Piazza del Popolo - - - - - - - - - 26

III.

IN ROME.

Winter in Earnest—Scenery of the Campagna—The Via Salara—View from Castel Giubileo—The Roman Forum—The Arch of Titus—Graffiti, or Wall-writings—Fragments of Marble—No Guide-book to Rome—Eclectic Theory in Sculpture—Raffaelle's Transfiguration—Goethe's Opinion - - - - - - 46

IV.

FROM ROME.

PAGE

Rome a Pagan City still—Moral State of her Priesthood—Insecurity of the Streets—A Case of Street Murder—Indignation at the Outrage—Romish Denial of Facts — Robbers' Passports; how obtained — Doll Worship—Romish Unanimity—Goddess Worship—Dishonour of Our Blessed Lord—Images Worshipped as Gods—Winking and Speaking Images—The Miraculous Picture at Vicovaro — Vouchers for the Miracle—The Second Commandment Expunged—Indulgences — The Pontifical Lottery — Drawing of the Lottery — Stakes in the Lottery — Subject of Prayers in Rome — How the Shepherds feed the Flock — Schools and Charities—Ignorance of the Police—The Pope's Newspaper—Justice the Thief's Ally—Good Taste in Preaching—Monsignor Liverani's Testimony—Sta. Maria in Via Lata—Rome a Blot on Christendom - - - - - - - 72

V.

THE SOUTH.

Stir of Life at Naples—Pompeii—Vesuvius—Aspect of a Lava-field—Present State of Vesuvius—Beauty of Sorrento—To Amalfi—Amalfi—Glen of the Molini—The Pteris Cretica—Ravello—The Grotta Azzurra—Beauty of Capri—Justice in a Free Country—Back to Naples—The St. Januarius Trick - - - - 135

VI.

CENTRAL ITALY.

PAGE

Farewell to Rome—Mount Soracté—Ruins of Falerii—Narni—Falls of Terni—Fountain of Clitumnus—Temple of Clitumnus—English Sundays Abroad; their Blessed Influence—St. Francis of Assisi—Upper Church at Assisi—The Great Convent at Assisi - 170

VII.

NORTHERN ITALY.

Perugia — Florence — The Madonna del Cardellino — Bologna — Bolognese School of Art — Francesco Francia — Guido Reni — Ravenna — Ferrara — The Ferrara Gallery — Garofalo's Allegorical Picture — Carpaccio's Death of the Virgin — Desolation of Venice — Bellini's Baptism of Christ—Effects of Bad Painting—Upholstery in Churches - - - - 196

VIII.

HOMEWARD.

Objects on the Simplon — Waterfalls — Trees — Alpine Flowers—Quaint Estimate of Foreigners—Improvements, to whom due—Continental Railway Blunders — Barbarities at Stations — Passports: Reluctant Abolition—Amenities of the *Octroi*—Annoyance for Annoyance' Sake—Calais, and the Channel - - 233

POSTSCRIPT ON THE FRANCO-ITALIAN CONVENTION - 261

LETTERS FROM ABROAD.

I.

THE RIVIERE.

MOST of us know that while there are many ways of going to Italy by land in summer, there is but one which can be depended on in winter. The passage of Mont Cenis boasts, indeed, of being open and practicable at all times of the year; but if any of my readers finds it as I found it in March 1861,[1] he will leave it out of his winter reckoning in future.

[1] A tremendous storm was raging during the whole of the night that we spent at the unsubstantial mountain inn at Susa. In the morning we were told that on the pass there were thirty feet of snow. The diligence that took on the passengers of the night train by which we arrived at Susa, had fallen over one of the precipices: lodging, however, in the soft snow beneath. At last we got over, but on a track extemporized over the fresh snow, and with men holding up our sledge, lest it should topple over owing to the inclination of the road.

There is but one way, I repeat, which can be depended upon, and that is by following the concavity of the sea-coast round from Marseilles to Nice and Genoa, and then from Genoa to Spezia and Pisa. These two roads round the western and eastern horns of the bay of Genoa, are called the Riviere or coast roads. That west of Genoa is the Riviera di Ponente, or western coast-road: that east of Genoa, the Riviera di Levante, or eastern coast-road. Both are eminently beautiful; which is the more so, is a point not settled, nor likely to be. Certainly no attempt towards its settlement will be made in the present letter. I wish merely to impart to my reader some of the exquisite pleasure which travelling along these roads has given me; and to trouble him with a few of the thoughts which wrought in my mind during the journey, owing to what I saw and heard.

Italy, in spite of Louis Napoleon's annexation, begins, where it always has begun, at Nice. Take your map, and find out the river Var, running into the sea a few miles west of Nice. That is nature's boundary between the two kingdoms. West of it, all is French: east of it, all is Italian. So then at the Var our notice shall begin. It is a lovely evening, December 3, 1863. A lovely evening of a lovely

day : a day not altogether without clouds, but nearly all bright glowing sunshine : the thermometer had been close upon 70° in the railway carriage, as we came from Toulon round the promontories of the Estrelles. The west has gathered its bands of orange, flushing through red into purple, and the sea has put on its light blue, with streaks of white, which indicates its deepest and most unbroken repose. We are in the carriage which met us at what was then terminus of the Mediterranean railway, and is carrying us into Nice. At every slight acclivity, we catch our first Italian prospect : the curve of a magnificent and graceful bay, marked by a line of houses and churches glowing in all the warmth of southern colour against the waning light. Villas, and monasteries, and tall graceful belfries, glitter among the olive groves which cover the lower hills ; and over all, the flushed barrier of distant Alps climbs peak after peak into the sky, capped with a serrated wall of purest snow. The eye roams hither and thither, uncertain whether to rest on the sky, or the town, or the mountains, or the sea, or the masses of china rose-trees in full bloom, which line the hedges and hang over the garden walls, or the oranges hanging golden and thick amidst the dark-green of the orchards. And so we enter Nice.

It is not for me to attempt description of a place so often described, and so well known. Some remark, however, ought to be made on the present state of things at Nice. This is, or ought to be, the height of its season. Our surprise was naturally great, when, on passing along the principal esplanade, the 'promenade des Anglais,' we saw every second house placarded to be let. The reason of this, we were told, is (and the same remark was repeated several times, further on) that the prices asked last year were so exorbitant as to have driven away the invalids who usually come there, to more reasonable quarters. If this be true, the people of Nice ought to look well to it, and to be wise in time. In two or three years the railway will be open throughout the Riviera di Ponente. There are many spots more favoured as to climate than Nice; sheltered from its bitter winds, and free from the nuisance of its slovenly torrent and its tormenting frogs. Unless Nice attracts its offended visitors back, it is certain that first Mentone, then San Remo, then perhaps other towns which at present are unknown, *carent quia vate sacro*, 'because no doctor has yet written a book about them,' will flourish at its expense. Access to all these will become easy: where English

comforts are transportable, there English invalids will be ordered; and Nice will become doubly miserable—annexed by France, and cast off by England.

The day which we spent at Nice was bitterly cold, though fine and clear. The north-west wind, called the mistral, was blowing from the snowy mountains; and though we were obliged to buy the thick-lined white umbrellas to keep off the sun, we required all our wraps to sit with comfort in an open carriage. No invalid could venture out on such a day. And this, while those at Mentone and San Remo were basking in their sheltered quarters, unconscious of a breath of cold.

I ought not to pass over our drive to the gorge of St. Andrea, a side valley four miles up the torrent; how we passed under the romantic chateau on its rock fringed with ilex and laurustinus and myrtle; then walked through a quaint narrow avenue of solemn cypresses to see the grot: how, when we came to it, we found a cave completely lined with the greenest and thickest maidenhair fern. This beautiful plant is the constant accompanier of water, and the haunts of water, all through the South. Every gorge, every shaded valley, is full of it.

Wherever the terraces of olives lie in deeper shade than usual, it is found matting the stone walls which support them. In the water-courses, now entirely dry, you may meet with great masses of it, with fronds from a foot to eighteen inches long; some of them so long that, on a former visit to Nice, I found the sheets of a newspaper only just large enough to press them in.

Nor ought I entirely to omit our afternoon drive to visit the little harbour of Villa Franca, were it not that in every word describing it, I should be anticipating, at a disadvantage, what I have to say by and by of the mass of scenery of which it forms a part.

From Nice begins, properly speaking, the Riviera road. It is otherwise called the *Corniche*, from its being cut like a ledge or cornice in the rocks over the sea.

It is a lovely cloudless morning, Dec. 5, 1863. The cold wind has subsided, and left the sun the mastery, who glares down from the bare blue sky with a force to which an English noonday in June is as twilight itself. The first stage of the road from Nice to Mentone has features peculiar to itself, and is perhaps the finest part of the whole. I say per-

haps; because it differs from the other parts, not by excelling them in their beauties, but by bearing a totally different character. On leaving Nice, the road strikes inland up the course of the torrent. It soon deserts the level of the valley, and mounts up by zig-zags, giving at every turn more and more striking views of the glittering town, backed by the deep-blue sea, whose bounding line rises higher and higher as the eye is higher which looks on it. At last we make a sudden turn, gaining a view inland of some snowy tops of the Maritime Alps, and mount up over the neck of the promontory which separates Nice from Villa Franca. From this point for several miles the road runs in a ledge on the face of the mountain, high up, attaining, indeed, the elevation of 2100 feet above the sea, which lies beneath. The view from this part of the road is of itself worth the journey from England. I am not writing a guide-book, but only describing here and there a scene which has struck my fancy and provoked my pen; I will therefore only remind the reader that it is of this that Tennyson says :—

> 'What Roman strength Turbía show'd
> In ruin, by the mountain road;
> How like a gem beneath, the city
> Of little Monaco, basking, glow'd.'

At Turbía, which is close to the highest point of the road, we left our carriage, and walked down the steep paved winding path, which once formed the only access to the petty principality of Monaco.

After all, there is no way of seeing even the least portion of nature, like visiting it on foot. Horseback has its unquestionable advantages, but it has its drawbacks. 'I came, because my horse would come,' is true of many a rider besides John Gilpin; but the negative proposition, 'I couldn't come, because my horse couldn't,' must be true of all. What a magnificent view over both sides of the coast that rock must command which is but ten paces above you, but shuts out all the promontories which your eye longs to trace out! But you are on horseback, and there is the trouble of alighting, tying up your horse, and remounting; and so you leave it unvisited. On yonder bank of olives you see a strange bright flower: what is it? Between the chinks of the walls which bound your path springs some unknown fern-like growth: can it be the *Asplenium septentrionale*, hitherto only seen pictured in books, or mythically reported as inhabiting Borrowdale? These questions must remain unanswered. The terrace your horse could not approach; the wall (he is a great lumbering beast

with a rope bridle, owning no master but a hopelessly unintelligent native, who shouts 'He!' behind you) he in all probability would not, on any persuasion. And so the horseman, if he be also a sketcher and a naturalist, misses much that would delight him, and makes his mountain way amidst many regrets. As for a carriage, it is only good for getting from one place to another where a railway is not yet made. Both modes of conveyance render anything like really seeing the country impossible; and the best carriage is but a poor substitute for the worst railway. Every one acts on this, and some few are beginning to confess it.

But we are wandering away from Monaco—the quaintest little rock-seated capital of a principality, with its reigning prince, and his four officers and eighteen soldiers. His power has been grievously clipped by the greater powers, and he has sold the larger and finer portion of his domain to France. His immediate predecessor seems to have done all he could to make his people miserable. He ground them down with taxes; he established a monopoly in his own favour of almost all the necessities of life: he allowed none to cross his frontier without payment (his territory being only five miles in diameter); he spent nothing among his subjects, living all his

days at Paris: and when he died, he had engraved on his tomb, *Cy gît qui voulut le bien* (Here lies one whose intentions were good)! What a specimen of that most mischievous class of persons who are always vaunting the same!

Let me say a word of Mentone. In many respects it has the advantage of Nice. At Nice, the background, though mountainous, is not beautiful. There are beautiful details for those who choose to explore them; but the main outlines are dull, and the distant aspect of the hills uninviting. At Mentone, on the other hand, the background is most lovely. Whether the shape or colour of the mountains be considered, there is nothing to desire; nor can anything be more interesting than the walks among the lemon groves,[1] and up through the terraces of olives, and forests of grand old pines.

At Mentone, we spent our first Sunday: on which, and its subjects, a word must be said. The position and duties of English Christians on the Continent have been much treated of, but do not yet seem by any means settled in the minds of our countrymen. Of course, as regards their own individual conduct,

[1] Now, alas (October 1864), almost all killed by the severity of last winter.

all is plain: in this every man's conscience will, in the fear of God, counsel him aright. But I am regarding the question more in an ecclesiastical and social light: and my questionings on that matter were suggested by the sight of the new English church at Mentone, in which we worshipped that day.

Let my remarks be prefaced by disclaiming any interference with the feeling of thankfulness with which one welcomes an English church in a foreign land. But within the limits of this gratitude, and, indeed, as tending to impress it more sensibly on the mind, let me in all kindliness ask why, in erecting English churches on the Continent, should we go to the very furthest verge of homeliness and dreary plainness? Is it wise, is it politic,—nay, to go further, can it be quite right,—to thwart the lifelong associations of thought in English worshippers, by thus offering them, instead of the decent comeliness of their houses of prayer at home, these four white walls and ten commandments? In which direction is the pliant and impressible mind, which has on it the memory of our English churches, likely to be drawn, when freed from home restraint? towards this studied dreariness, or towards the excessive adornment of the foreign churches? Happily for the present risk, that

adornment, in most foreign towns much frequented by the English, is so utterly out of all taste, and so revolting to every feeling of reverence, that its power may be almost left out of account; but this is far from being the case in the larger cities, where more purity of taste prevails: in Paris, for example, in Munich, and in many of the churches in Rome itself. Very far should I be from recommending even the slightest approach to a foreign character in our Continental churches: but why not in some degree retain our own well-known and accustomed English arrangements? There need not even be side-aisles, there need not be tower, or even turret: the building may be every whit as plain and simple as it now is: but (using the term in its usual external acceptation) it may be a *church*, known and recognised by Englishmen as such, without costing another hundred pounds, without giving any English Protestant, or those who, not belonging to us, may yet desire to worship with us, one moment's offence. And I own (still speaking in all kindliness of feeling, and liable to correction if any exceptional circumstances exist of which I am not aware) I felt somewhat disappointed that a thriving English colony like Mentone, numbering every year so many of the wealthy among its members,

should have suffered to be stereotyped, as its English church, so dreary a building as that in which we worshipped. Unwilling thus to leave the subject, I must record how thankfully we worshipped, and what an inexpressible refreshment in a foreign land is always the hearty genuineness of our English liturgy—the contact of the soul with God, and the unseen and simple reliance on Christ alone, which one cannot but feel is so scantily present in the worship which we witness in the gaudier churches of this foreign land.

The sun rose next morning, cloudless and glorious, from the dark purple sea-line, which is broken only by the distant serrated mountains of Corsica, as we passed along the walled terrace which terminates Mentone eastward. I shall not minutely describe our way, but endeavour to give a general idea of it. Let the reader imagine a road carried from headland to headland, sometimes along the face of rugged cliffs, sometimes across intervening plains with their wide shingly torrent beds: the blue sea always seen to the right, in many varied aspects; now chafing the rocks beneath the road, now forming the background to promontories clothed with olives, or studded with orange-orchards thick with golden fruit, or marked with the graceful feathered palm. Let him

people the ways, and the insulated heights, with bright arcaded and towered towns, crowned by slender many-storied campanili, and supply at every opening on the left, and up the bed of every torrent, lovely receding valleys, with village after village perched on successive heights, ending in a grand pile of snowy mountains. Let him arch this unrivalled scenery over with a sky of tenderest blue unsullied by a cloud, and he will have, in imagination far falling short of the reality, some representation of what we saw between Mentone and Genoa.

A few miles from the former place, we passed a picturesque gorge, which forms the present frontier between France and Italy. Characteristic differences soon appear, not in the country, as I have said, but in the prevalence of the Italian language in the notices on the walls and the names of the shops. The French authorities are doing all they can to banish the Italian from the annexed provinces. They will allow the *colporteurs*, for instance, a license to sell Protestant bibles in French, but not in Italian.

The moment one crosses the frontier, the land and the language are at one again. Some of the notices are very characteristic of the present state of things. '*Viva Vittorio Emmanuele II. in Cam-*

pidoglio,' is one of the first that meets us: 'Hurrah for Victor Emmanuel in the Capitol!' Again, in every little town, and sometimes occurring more than once, we have '*Albergo di Roma e Venezia*,' keeping in the people's mind the two objects of their eager but at present fruitless desire.[1]

It is impossible for an Englishman to travel in the Kingdom of Italy without deep interest in its people and its progress. It is the first instance in modern history, of anything like an approach to success in the working out of freedom by a continental nation. When we look on the Italians, we see men who have worthily won, and are most creditably following up, the liberty which is now blessing them. There are still dark clouds hanging over their horizon, still problems to be solved, at the solution of which no human skill can presume to guess: but as we pass along this lovely shore, and bask in the brightness of this cloudless sun, we cannot help breathing an earnest wish, *Floreat Italia!* and hoping that this its course of well-regulated freedom and increasing religious light and education may not be destined to be cut short by domestic variance, or external aggression.

[1] See Note at the end of this volume.

Our first day's journey took us over ground made almost classical by Ruffini's beautiful story of Doctor Antonio. The blue promontory of Bordighera, glistening far off with its white fort and houses, delighted and surprised us with its woods of waving palm-trees: surprised us, I say, after the Laureate's lines:—

> 'Nor knew we well what pleased us most,
> Not the clipt palm of which they boast.' . . .

But then his Riviera journey was made in summer, after the cutting of the palm-leaves for the Easter ceremonies in Rome: ours, three weeks before Christmas. Certainly the stately palms fringing the coast give to this country a strange oriental look, and add much to the charm of novelty, which, after all, adds the zest of zests to foreign travel. Some of these trees are, to one who has not been in the East, really magnificent. One I remember, near that sunny curve of coast between Nice and Monaco which is known as 'La petite Afrique,' standing high over a garden, laden with its bunches of golden dates, hanging by their broad bands as yellow and bright: two more adorn the street of the quaint old town of San Remo. (By the way, why have they shorn these goodly brethren of their honour, by changing the

name of their comfortable little inn from 'La Palma' to 'La Grande Bretagne?') Another, loftier than any of these, once grew by a country villa between Nice and St. Andrea, but was blown down in a gale last winter.

We found it convenient to divide our journey from Mentone to Genoa at a strange old sea-side town called Alassio. An English reader who has not been out of his own country, or has seen only French, German, or Swiss towns, can hardly form an idea of these coast-towns in north Italy. From the broad straight road across the marsh, and the gravelly dry bed of the torrent, you suddenly enter the street through a dark gate, armed with a disregarded notice that carriages 'must not enter the town, but drive round.' The houses appear sky-high, and opposite neighbours might shake hands out of their windows. Your carriage bowls almost noiselessly along the flat paving stones with which the street is covered, the driver dispersing the passers-by with sonorous cracks of his whip, and howls perfectly inimitable by an English larynx. The long perspective of the straight narrow street is broken above by numerous bands of masonry uniting the houses, intended, I believe, to steady them in case of earth-

quake. The effect of these arches thrown irregularly over the way, is strange and picturesque, especially when, as in the old city of San Remo, the streets wind up a steep acclivity.

Suddenly your carriage stops, before what you suppose, from indications both of sight and smell, to be the vault of some vast stable. But it is your inn: and not improbably, a most respectable and comfortable one. After some clamouring and patience, mine host or his deputy appears, vainly endeavouring to persuade his damp matches to light the candle which is to show you up to the first habitable floor. This proves generally to be the *second*, the ground level being all stable and coach-house;—the first-floor, kitchen and tap-room, and house of the family. The staircase is always of stone; in the larger towns, of marble: and, whether stone or marble, not washed since the French general slept there on his way to the campaign of Italy; and probably not then. Arrived at the second landing, and having waited some time for the discovery of the key, you find yourself in large, airy, and generally clean rooms, now usually carpeted, and furnished (blessings on their inventor!) always in Italy with iron bedsteads.

An agreeable surprise awaited us at Alassio. The

'Grand Hôtel d'Italie, tenu par Agostino Pungibovi,' had been an ancient palace. Our host, whom we named the Earl of Buckingham[1] (because his strange name reminded us of an old riddle respecting that county), threw open the doors of a suite of rooms, rich with massive carving and heavy gilded panels: and we gathered round our tea-table in a chamber which might have been the boudoir of a princess. But alas for its departed glories! our servant told us next morning, that he saw the waiter trying to grind our coffee by crushing it with an old bottle!

Again we saw the unclouded sun rise from the dark blue sea-line as we passed out of Alassio on our way to Genoa.

In every respect this day differed from the last. Cloudless indeed it was, but with a strong northerly breeze, the outskirt, as we afterwards learned, of a storm which spent its fury on the coasts of England

[1] A friend sends me two more examples of names similarly compounded: *Jean Pique-l'Ane*, a famous Dominican of Paris, —and *Armanno Pungi-lupo*, a heretic of Ferra,—both in the thirteenth century. The Frenchman is called in Latin Joannes Pungens-asinorum, and got his name 'because his disputations left no quiet to indolent minds.'

The riddle has been inquired after: 'Why is Buckinghamshire like an ox-goad? Because it runs into Oxon and Herts.'

and France. The glorious sea was lashed into white breakers, flashing and glistening along its surface of sapphire blue, sending their broken crests scudding in sheets of smoke-like spray, or, as we turned and caught them in the sunshine, flickering with the sportive hues of the iris. Our road ran mostly along the shore, often tunnelling the promontories, and opening one beautiful bay after another. First Albenga, with its hundred mediæval towers and bastioned walls, its quaint dark streets and grotesquely carved cathedral, and Piazza de' Leoni, from the pillared lions which guard it: then town after town as the coast opened wider, till we looked on Savona, stretched round its curving strand, a fair vision for the day to end with, had we not been looking for a fairer. And now the opposite coast of Italy reveals itself, stretching far far away to the south, down to Chiavari, and even as far as to the well-known outlines of the headlands bounding the Gulf of Spezia; and gleaming bit by bit, the Queen of the Riviera, Genoa, 'La Superba,' comes into sight. And well indeed does it deserve the name. A grander view can hardly be imagined, than it presented when we first looked on it, stretched for many a mile round the majestic sweep of its gulf;—masts,

houses, and palaces, and churches, and forts, d up the hills, glowing with the rose-tints of the lining sun, and backed by the snow-streaked ıntains reaching far into the sky.

)f Genoa itself I say almost nothing. How we ıt a sunny day in traversing its streets of palaces; · we mounted the roofs of S. Maria di Carignano, , surveyed its splendours of land and sea; how passed untempted its shops of filagree and velvet, those who wish to understand consult the pages John Murray, on whose well-earned monopoly I e no wish to trespass.

ıgain the sun rose upon us, as we passed out of ıoa, and began our course along the second, or :ern, coast-road, the Riviera di Levante. At ·e, this difference is perceptible. There are no :e wide-stretching orchards of orange and lemon :s: in solitary gardens here and there an avenue ears, bright with golden fruit; but the lavish ıriance of the other Riviera is gone, and the ely palm also is rare. It seems to be true here), as in England, that the force of the morning far surpasses, throughout the year, that of his ning rays. So many days begin gloriously and in cloud and gloom, that, in the long-run, the

wall, or the coast, exposed to the east has gr
the advantage.

The scenery of the eastern Riviera differs f
that of the western, in being more massed in l
and striking groups, and less universally presen
constant beauty. Some points along the road
never be forgotten : the grand promontories
broken coast by Chiavari and Recco, the lovely
of Spezia, the lavish and gorgeous colours of
mountains behind Carrara and Massa.

Spezia, what shall I say of it? Coming upo
from the Genoa road down the zigzags which
scend the olive-terraced hills, nothing more beau
can be imagined than the first sight of the bay.
sea (ever the first object for the eye to rest or
light azure blue, streaked with white lines of c
On it are riding at anchor an abundance of ves
from the stately man-of-war to the tiniest fishing-b
all reflected in the waveless surface. Across the
rise, one above another, lines of wooded hills,
lower ranges studded with white glittering buildi
the higher, melting away from brown and green,
the still lingering yellow tints of autumn, into
derest purple : and all surmounted, far far abov
the blue sky, by a splendid jagged line of s

and pines, glowing with the warmest tints of the pile. Nor is the inland view from the shore undeserving of a sea-prospect so beautiful. Vast hills mount guard round this future arsenal of Italy, terraced to the very summit with the grey olive. Seven different glens, each dark with recesses of shade and hollow tresses of rock, divide off one hill from another: and thick-sprinkled on every knoll of vantage, gleam white villages with their slender steeples through the sunny haze. East of the town, and overhanging its suburbs, rises the dark ruin of its ancient castle, buttressed with wild ravines of yellow rock fringed with myrtle and myrtle.

A few miles from Spezia brought us to Sarzana, the present terminus of the Italian coast railway. In a few months it will reach Spezia; and the traveller three or four years hence will accomplish the whole journey which I have been describing, from Nice to Genoa, in two short days.

Doubtless my readers are expecting that I should strike up a lamentation over the prospect which this magnificent coast line has of being spoilt by the invasion of the locomotive: but if so, he will be disappointed, and will part from me with a very low estimate of my taste and feeling. I do not believe

that railways spoil fine scenery, or that the traveller enjoys it one whit the less for traversing it by their means. The eyes that observe at all, observe everywhere and under all circumstances: the eyes that are not given to observe, take in nothing of a country, though they are carried through it at a snail's pace. One man can tell of many a fair flower growing on the banks of railway cuttings, blooming early or continuing late: of rare ferns fringing the banks of masonry: of solitary coves, where the breakers play against the rocks, seen and withdrawn in an instant: of vast fenny plains, spreading their natural horizon under the vaulting starlight: of meadows with their silver streams and scattered herds gleaming through mist beneath the lofty viaduct. And another may be borne through fair lands at leisure, walking up the hills and making his daily halt in the towns, and have nothing to tell of, after all, but the petty annoyances of the way. He who wishes to see the Riviere, will be better able to have his wish when the railway is finished, than now. He will be able to pass over them in half the time, and yet give twice the time to seeing their beautiful towns. If he is hurrying on to Florence or Rome, he can obtain his end without any of the difficulties which now

beset it: if he is anxious to loiter by the way, he can do so to his heart's content. Does he want luxury and comfort? nothing can surpass the first-class in a well-appointed *foreign* railway. Is he desirous to see the manners of the people? no traveller by *diligence* or *vetturino* ever gets such experience of them, as he who rides in a third-class carriage. It is time that an end should be put to the mawkish outcry of sentimental tourists against the best and safest, as well as the most advantageous mode of traversing a country: and that we should honestly and heartily acknowledge our obligations to science, and our thankfulness to Him by whom all truth is revealed, for the wonderful discovery which has in one generation changed the face of society, and multiplied the capacities of man.

Our coast journey ended at Pisa; where also opened upon us the new world of Italian architecture and art.

Here, therefore, I take leave of my readers: hoping, like Italy's King and people, but I trust with better prospect of fulfilment, that we may ere long meet on the Capitol.

II.

'TOWARDS ROME.'

THERE is perhaps hardly anything in the journey that strikes the English eye with such surprise, as the well-known group of buildings at Pisa. I find this to be almost always the case with objects previously known by representation. The *mind* forms its own idea of any object heard of, and expects to be corrected when the object is actually visited. But if we see a drawing of it, we correct the mind's idea accordingly, and do not expect to find ourselves utterly beside the mark after all. And, of all representation, photography fails the most signally to convey anything like the true idea of an object. All *drawing* is more or less according to our human appreciation of the relative magnitude of objects, and of the parts of objects. A human soul guided a

human hand, in tracing the outline, and in filling up the details. Those features of general effect are most dwelt on, those details are most carefully filled in, which most affect our sensibilities. If the character of a mountain is rough and serrated, that character dwells on the mind of the artist, and prompts his pencil as he draws. If the character of a building is plain, or ornate, from his conception of it as such springs his representation of it: true, but not all the truth: truer, for not being all the truth. But photography is soulless and idealess. Behind the power that traced the outlines sat no human genius: over the skill that filled in the details, presided no principle of appreciating selection. The glorious hills, so vast in our estimation, so full of beautiful gradations of light and colour, are dwarfed down in the photograph to a mere ungraceful line just darkening above the horizon, uniform in its dreary shadow. And so it is with the group before which we are now standing. How many times have we seen them in apparent solidity in the stereoscope —how familiar we thought we were with the lean of the Campanile, with the domed Baptistery, with the outline of the Cathedral, and the low wall of the Campo Santo! And yet, how different all and each

of them now appear! First, the Campanile leans many degrees more than we had ever imagined. It seems hardly possible to stand under it, much less to mount it, with safety. Yet I just now passed a shop window where a photograph was exhibited, taken from this very spot, in which the fact of any leaning at all was rather supplied by the imagination than suggested by the picture. Then the Baptistery seems so vast in its proportions, and the Cathedral so small. Again, as to surface: what representation can ever give the waxen mellowness of ancient marble? Who ever prepared us to find such lovely play of colour on the old walls? Who ever told us that we should find them thrown brightly out by this fine background of purple-blue hills, or that their formal rectangular lines would be relieved by that strange sharp outline which is traced behind them on the cloudless blue?

It is for these reasons, that travel is so precious to a man. Once seen, and gazed on, and pondered on, a thing of beauty becomes indeed a joy for ever. Before, it was among the mind's credenda: heard of, read of in writing, or read of in printing: but from the moment of eye witness, no longer a credendum, but a living fact, underlying the after-life. And the faculties become wonderfully strengthened for, and

by, acquisitions of this kind : not weakened, as they often are by that other. The writer of these lines has, ever since his schoolboy days, been troubled with one of the weakest and most treacherous of memories. It was thought that this faculty had been overtaxed at school by learning, in competing for a repetition prize, many thousand lines at once by heart. Be this as it may, the fact is so, to his frequent and grievous cost. But it befell him, three years ago, to spend four weeks at Rome. It is not too much to say that not an incident of those four weeks has escaped from his mind. The visit here, with the sights then for the first time witnessed, seems indelibly burnt into the memory. He has got his journey's worth, even if he got nothing intrinsically precious, by rescuing from oblivion one month of the past.

But I must not waste in reflection the space which more properly belongs to description. And next in order to be described should come that wonder of Bible pictures, the Campo Santo, or cloistered burying-ground, of Pisa.

I said in my last letter that I had no intention of trespassing on the peculiar beat of Mr. Murray. While it is so well occupied by him and his staff,

and while all who have attempted to supersede him have failed so signally, I am content to leave him quietly in possession: with, however, just this hint, applying as much to the last edition of 'Central Italy' as to those which have preceded: that the work would be still improved by a careful revision *on the spot*. This is true more especially of that part of it relating to Siena, which contains some mistakes hardly possible for an eye-witness.

In the Campo Santo, we have impressed on the walls, in the coloured characters of fresco-painting, the quaint ideas of the old Pisan school of painters with regard to Scripture history, and to the life, death, and future of man. The names of the painters, and the various subjects in detail, are to be found in the guide-books. It is sad to have to say that some of the most deeply interesting, both as to painter and subject, are so obliterated as to be barely intelligible. Of those which have escaped the ravages of time, I will select one of the most remarkable, as a specimen, for detailed description.

The subject is 'The Triumph of Death:' the painter, Andrea d'Orcagna: his date, about 1330. The picture is one of crowded action, and contains very many personages. The action may be supposed

to begin in the lower corner on the right hand. There we see what appears to be a wedding party seated in festivity under a grove of orange trees laden with fruit. Over two of them a pair of winged lovers flutter in the air, and musicians are entertaining them with merry strains. But close to them on the left comes swooping down on bats' wings, and armed with the inevitable scythe, the genius of Death. Her wild hair streams in the wind, her bosom is invulnerable, being closed in a trellised armour of steel. Beneath her, on the ground, are a heap of corpses, shown by their attire to be the great and wealthy of the world. Three winged figures, two fiends and one angel, are drawing souls, in the form of children, out of the mouths of three of these corpses. Above, the air is full of flying spirits, angels and demons: the former beautiful and saintly, the latter hideous and bestial. Some are dragging, or bearing upwards, human souls: others are on their way to fetch them from the heaps of dead: others again are flying about apparently without aim. Further yet to the left, a company of wretched ones, lame and in rags, are invoking Death with outstretched arms to come to their relief: but she sweeps by and heeds them not.

Dividing one half of the picture from the other, is a high range of rocks, terminating in a fiery mountain, into which the demons are casting the unhappy souls which they have carried off. Beyond that seems to be a repetition of the same lesson respecting Death in another form. A party of knights and dames are seen issuing on horseback from a mountain pass. In the left-hand corner of the picture there lie in their path three corpses in coffins, with coronets on their heads. One is newly dead; on the second, decay has begun its work; the third is reduced to a grinning skeleton. The impression produced on the gay party by the sight is very various. Some look on carelessly; one holds his nose in disgust; one, a lady jewelled and crowned, leans her head on her hand in solemn thought. Above, on a rising ground, an aged monk (it is said, Saint Macarius) is holding a scroll, and pointing out to the passengers the moral of the sight which meets them. The path winds up a hill crowned with a church, and by its side at various points are hermits sitting in calm security, or following peaceful occupations. One of them is milking a doe; another is reading; a third is calmly contemplating from a distance the valley of Death. About them are

various animals and birds. The idea evidently intended to be conveyed is that deliverance from the fear of death is to be found not in gaiety and dissipation, but in contemplation and communion with God.

Such is this wonderful fresco; and the execution is as wonderful as the conception. Belonging as the painter did to a rude and early period of art, he yet had the power of endowing his figures with both majesty and tenderness of expression. Kugler in his 'Handbook of Painting' has expressed an opinion that these three pictures by Andrea d'Orcagna at Pisa were works of his early youth. He infers this from the greater finish and simplicity of some acknowledged works of his on similar subjects still existing at Florence.

It may easily be imagined, even from the meagre description given above, what a treasure-house of interest in art the Pisa burying-ground, with its cloister, may prove to him who thoroughly examines it. But its pictorial interest is not all. The Campo Santo is the antiquarian museum, and the modern sepulchral cloister, of Pisa. Its walls are bordered with ancient sarcophagi and pieces of sculptured marble, and in the ample spaces of its ambulatory,

monuments have been erected to the illustrious dead of modern times. We noticed with pleasure a white marble cenotaph to the first man of revived Italy, Count Cavour.

Among the objects of historical interest preserved in the Campo Santo, are the chains with which, in times of mediæval hostilities, the Genoese were accustomed to close the port of Pisa. One set of them, long ago sent by the Genoese as a present to Florence, the enemy of Pisa, and hung up there as a trophy, was given to Pisa by the Florentines in 1848, as a sign, says the inscription, of a new era having commenced; the other was presented by the Genoese themselves in 1860, 'the first year of Italian independence, as an eternal sign of fraternal affection, of concord, and of union henceforth indissoluble.'

After Pisa, our next halting-place was Siena, a name illustrious in the history of early Italian art. The traveller arriving from the north here first sees the effect of many-coloured marbles in the façade of a cathedral. If his eye have been accustomed to nothing but our colourless buildings, it will be a moment of strange amazement to him when he first faces the gorgeous front of the Duomo at Siena.

Still more strange will the interior seem to him, with its stripes of dark and light marble. It is a new and unaccustomed effect, and as such is apt to be at once harshly and unfavourably characterized by our countrymen. It would be well if they would endeavour, in judging of foreign buildings and customs, to leave their insular ideas behind, and found their criticisms on data arising from the facts and materials before them. It is no doubt ridiculous, when a country squire, returning from Italy to his estate in the midland counties of England, appends to his Elizabethan mansion a Palladian façade, or lines his hall with Italian marbles; but it is just as ridiculous, when an Englishman stands before the *chefs-d'œuvre* of Italian art in their own country, and rails at them because they are not in the English Gothic style.

I shall not, in these hasty notes, dilate on the interest or the importance of the Siena school of painting;—leaving that to the works wherein such matters are treated. But I will just say that there is one fresco in the Sienese Gallery, to see which is worth the journey thither. I mean of course the magnificent picture, by Razzi, commonly called 'Sodoma,' of our Lord bound to the pillar. It is

impossible to imagine the majesty of suffering better represented. The execution of the details is perfect. The prevalent tint is a reddish brown, and the texture of the flesh so delicately painted as to give a waxen or almost an enamel effect. It is a work on which the whole power and devotion of no ordinary genius have been expended: one of those pictures lightly esteemed, it would appear, by connoisseurs in art (Kugler hardly mentions it, and describes it wrongly), but making, on any mind capable of feeling, an indelible impression.

From Siena onwards we entered on a new and most interesting country; hidden, unfortunately, when we passed through it, by a tantalizing fog, which revealed it only in glimpses. The deep sylvan valleys of Tuscany, at the beginning of December 1863, were clothed in the richest autumnal hues of varied foliage. Oak, chestnut, maple, hawthorn, and wild cherry, mingled their tints, ranging from palest yellow to scarlet and bright purple, and across the head of every vale stood up the massive ranges of distant hills, of deepest and loveliest blue. So we passed on till the railway came to an end at Ficulle, and then on again into the sunny afternoon and glow of evening, till Orvieto,

dark on its towering cliffs, stood up against the sunset sky.

Our night-quarters were close to the city gate, within sound of the plashing of a quaint old fountain, on whose spray played the beams of an unclouded Italian moon. And curiosity could not wait for the rising of the sun next morning, before wandering out to find the far-famed cathedral front. As the downward road in seach of a river, so the upward in quest of an Italian cathedral, is pretty sure to be right in the end. No pleasure greater in its way, than starting forth into the streets of a strange town, unaccompanied by guide and unfurnished with map or plan, and wandering at one's 'own sweet will,' making discoveries at every turn, till at last some corner brings one unexpectedly on a grand object known from youth, then seen for the first time. How the heart leaps with gladness as the bright figured pinnacles are discovered gleaming up some side alley—how the step quickens till the whole gorgeous façade blazes out on the sight! And if there ever was an object of which all this is true, it is the front of the Cathedral at Orvieto. Judged by the strict rules of architectural effect, its shape would perhaps be designated as too stiffly symmetrical and

unbroken : but it is a very miracle of art in graven work and colour. Below, the buttresses, and spaces around the doors, are filled with wonderful bas-relief carvings by Giovanni da Pisa. The upper portions are entirely occupied, between the buttresses, with the most gorgeous mosaics of Scriptural and traditional subjects. As is usual in these decorations, the groups are in the brightest possible colours, on a gold ground. It is this effulgence of rich colour, mellowed but not obliterated by age, seen with the background of the lovely blue of an Italian sky, that gives to mosaic adornment its peculiar charm. Some of the mosaics at Rome date as far back as the fifth century, and still retain, if not their freshness, yet their richness of colour, after exposure of nearly fifteen hundred years.

The next day brought us within the now shrunk-up dominions of the Priest-King (Pontifice Re), as his more ardent supporters are, with a sort of judicial infelicity, fond of calling him. The Papal frontier is passed shortly before arriving at Monte-Fiascone, once so renowned in England for its wine : and outside this town are his guard-house and custom-house.

So from this moment we are denizens of the ter-

ritory of the Pope. That group of houses, on which we look back at the foot of yonder hill, has been to us the threshold of a region unique in the modern world. No greater contrast can be imagined than that between free Italy and the ground over which we are now passing. The former need not be described. Every Englishman knows what it is, or, at all events, what it is striving to be. It may suffice then to say, that all which free Italy is striving to be, the authorities of this land are not only *not* striving to be, but with all the appliances of all their powers, are *striving not to be.*

For obvious reasons, I shall not dilate on this subject now; but hope to devote a letter to it hereafter. I will only say *now*, that we have entered a country, not to be regarded as whole centuries behind the rest of the world (for that it might be, and yet striving to make up way and supply its defects), but as choosing, out of the means which this nineteenth century affords it, weapons to prevent the nineteenth century from passing its frontiers. However, we have passed them; and are speeding towards its world-famed capital.

From Viterbo to Rome is a long day, as journeys are made in the Papal States: being just forty-five

English miles. First, some very picturesque mountains are climbed, commanding a magnificent view over the hills and plains of Tuscany; mountains rendered not less picturesque by relays of gendarmes being posted at intervals in huts of heather to defend the road from brigands. There is something retributive in Rome, the great manufacturer and nurse of brigandage, living in dread of it herself.

On reaching the brow of these mountains, the eye is greeted with a sight which can never be forgotten. The range of snow-clad Apennines, far to the east, rises above the level lines of morning clouds,

> 'As if some bright Elysian land
> Were freely sailing in mid-heaven;'

below gleam, in bands of blue and purple, the wide stretches of the Campagna, from Civita Castellana, glittering on its hill far below, to Monte Gennaro, with its sharp peak and channelled sides, and thence to the range of the Alban hills, an outline familiar to all who know the lovely environs of Rome. As we advance, we can soon trace the Tiber, meandering through the purple plain; and by-and-by the *vetturino*, who has not spoken a word all these three days, looks round from his perch, and calls out, 'La

cupola!'—'The dome!' For a brief period the romance of the moment possesses one. How often is this the case! Every head is thrust out, every finger pointing; nay, we alight and climb a bank, much to the astonishment of a number of boors passing in their country cart, to get a view of the great dome, seen over the shoulder of Monte Mario, yet twenty miles off.

And this view from twenty miles off, and a few others from more or less miles off, are in truth all the really striking sights of the highest dome in the world. It seems as if everything connected with St. Peter's were fated to be a gigantic blunder. Read Mr. Harford's life of Michael Angelo, and look at his plan of the church as the great designer intended it to be, and his other plan of the church as it is now. The dome is a fine one in itself—not well placed upon its base, from which it recedes like an egg in a cup; but this would have been a trifle, had it been grandly lifted in the air as Michael Angelo intended. But as it is now, the dome is sunk beneath the parapet of a perfectly hideous façade, which façade itself in its turn is overtopped by the shapeless masses of the Vatican, which looks like a union workhouse built on top of a railway station, and a gigantic printing-

office superimposed as an attic and an afterthought. However, more of this when we get to it.

As we drive on, every step of the road brings new interest; unquestionably, this is the best entrance for the stranger to Rome. He sees it as it ought to be seen: first, its great church, the centre round which its modern history is grouped; then its surrounding Campagna, full of classic sights and well-known names, in the midst of which the city sitting in the wilderness recalls to the mind the Apocalyptic vision; then the Tiber, sweeping round the base of Monte Mario with its broad yellow stream. And then the long suburb which intervenes before entering the city serves in some measure to prepare the eye for the streets of Rome itself. The strange mixture of groups which border the road as soon as the Ponte Molle is crossed can hardly be matched in any city in Europe. The dark-faced unshaven country folk, with their sheep-skin nether garment; the solid quadrangular Romans, with their green-lined cloaks wrapped over one shoulder; the infinitely varied clerical figures, forming full half the passers-by, all with the ample shovel-hat, but with garments beneath it so different in colour and in cut as to defy any but the most practised to distinguish them according to their ranks and

orders: from one to another of these the eye wanders, lost in pleasing bewilderment. Here, the empty coach of a cardinal prince of the church passes slowly along, followed by his Eminence in his scarlet stockings and cloak, with his footmen walking by his side. Close to him a bearded capuchin, in his brown serge frock and rope girdle, looking as if he came fresh from a Smithfield group in Fox's Martyrs. And let me say to the young English traveller in passing, that this last thought is by no means a bad one to take with him into Rome, and keep with him while he is there. He calls her the Eternal City: never was a name more aptly chosen. She is unchanged in these days of change: the fires of Smithfield do but slumber. Let this never be forgotten.

But here we are in the Porta del Popolo, the Flaminian Gate, known to Englishmen as that from which the famous edict issued, a few years since, which parcelled their country into fictitious dioceses, ignoring even its Roman Christianity. Two objects demand attention before we enter. On the left is a majestic entrance to a park, with an inscription to the effect that a Roman prince has adorned and amplified the access to his grounds for the benefit of the public; on the right are three large square doorways, defended

from the weather by flat projecting roofs. What does my reader suppose these may be? These are the entrances to the only English church tolerated in the Papal States. It is placed, more for the parade than for the reality of exclusion, outside the gate. Here assembles, week after week, the largest congregation in Rome. Of this, too, and of some facts connected with it, more may be said hereafter.

The entrance of the Piazza del Popolo is worthy of Rome, which is more than can be said of any other among the twelve. While our carriage is waiting for the passport and the Custom-house, we can see the tower of the Capitol rising at the end of the Corso, which stretches away a mile in length, right before us; we can see down the two other long streets which diverge on either side, the Babuino and the Ripetta: on the left rises, terrace above terrace, adorned with rostral pillars and statues and arcades, the stately ascent to the Pincian, with its fringing aloes and palms; in the centre of the Piazza is one of the many obelisks which once adorned Egypt, and were transported in imperial times to Rome; and at its base four quaint lionesses, in marble, pour from their mouths the tribute of sparkling water which is never wanting in Rome. Over all is the clearest cloudless

sky; and every western building and wall is burning with the ruddy glow of the Roman sunset.

This letter was entitled 'Towards Rome.' It has fulfilled its promise: and here, as the gendarme presents the passport, and our carriage is set free from the Custom-house, let us part for the present.

III.

IN ROME.

HUSH! Every one who has been in Rome knows the value of this interjection. It indicates a necessity which is imposed on all who have their wits about them: a necessity which is laid upon them as long as they are here, and as a condition of their remaining here. So that this letter will deal with matters which are not touched by that interjection, and the warning conveyed by it. A future one may be written under other conditions.

> Imperious Cæsar, dead, and turned to clay,
> Might stop a hole to keep the wind away.

Thus wrote Shakspeare: and would that it might be so! For now for twenty days has this bitter tramontane (north-east) wind been blowing, and these

Roman houses seem drilled with holes through which to let it in. During these twenty days the average maximum temperature in the shade has been 45°: one day it was as low as 40°: and that with a cloudless sun hardly tolerable without an umbrella. The minimum night temperature has ranged from 27° to 22.5°, the latter being the lowest rate marked by my registering thermometer. The orange and lemon trees are cut, but they tell me will recover; only the young shoots, full of opening bloom, having suffered. The dikes in the neighbourhood of the city are all frozen hard. The Triton in the Piazza Barberini, which throws up a jet of water from its shell, is covered with a beautiful drapery of icicles, and is daily surrounded by a gazing crowd, among whom are sketchers and photographers. Meantime—so dry is this climate—the maiden-hair fern in the substructions of the Forum is in full beauty, with its splendid fronds of a foot and eighteen inches in length; and the masses of aloes on the Pincian and in the gardens of the villas continue without injury. You may put a piece of ice in the full sunshine on the street, and it will vanish without a drop of wet being perceptible. It may well be imagined, after this description, that the contrast between sun and

shade is something greater than we in England can well imagine. It is nothing less than passing from a very warm day in May to a very cold one in January. This difference, with a little allowance for exposure to the wind, may be also stated as being that between the city and the Campagna. In the city streets, winter; in the Campagna, glorious summer.

Now, above all others, is the time for the scenery of that strange picturesque tract which surrounds the Eternal City. St. John describes Rome, in the Apocalypse, as sitting upon her seven hills in the wilderness. And a wilderness indeed it is. First, in every direction that leads into the Campagna, you pass the inhabited streets; then comes a belt of vineyards and villas, fading off into desolation as you proceed; then come the grand old walls, stretching away, with their rich-coloured brickwork and flanking towers. You pass out through a stately gate, through which legions have gone out and in fifteen hundred years ago, and you are in the Campagna. There it is before you, mile after mile, brownish green in the foreground, red in the middle distance, melting away into purple and blue in the farther distance, and bounded by a glorious bank of mountain, of colours not to be attempted by pen or pencil. Hardly a

human habitation is visible, save where, on the Alban Hills to your right, the villages gleam out, sprinkling their gorgeous sides with spots of pearl. Ancient towers and tombs are cast at random about the waste. Flat it is not, but full of the most picturesque undulations, and even lines of low cliffs and winding streams. Endless are its varieties of beauty, in outline, in grouping, and, above all, in colour. For miles and miles the ancient and modern aqueducts bridge it with their countless arches—haunts of all the lovely hues of the bow of heaven. Watch them in the yellow and orange of the morning and noonday sun; watch them mellowing off as the westering beam slopes on them, turning their gold to copper, then casting that copper into the glow of the furnace, then cooling it down with the dull iridescence of parting evening; watch them till the green grey of the fading light has subdued them into the sober mass of undistinguished plain and mountain; then wrap your cloak double round you, and stride away through the chilled streets and the thronging Corso to your steep open staircase, and your snug log fire, and meditate on as fair and heavenly a sight as ever blessed a day on this varied earth.

Rome itself is a place of never-dying and ever-

varying interest; but the Campagna of Rome is a pure source of unfailing delight. I have just returned from a walk of sixteen miles to Fidenæ and Castel Giubileo, out of the Porta Salara, in a north-north-easterly direction from the city. A more unpromising day could not be conceived. The sky was leaden, the wind north-east, the thermometer 37°, and fine snow-flakes beginning to powder the streets. My friend and I agreed that it would be an afternoon for a fine bracing walk; so we set forth; and I record our expedition here by way of contrast to the description in my last paragraph, and to show that it is not only under clear Italian skies that this exquisite country can fill the heart with delight.

After a biscuit and a glass of Velletri wine at our rooms in the Piazza Nicosia, we set out at twelve o'clock, past the great Borghese Palace, and the Corso, yet purple with the pozzolana strewed for the Carnival, which began yesterday; past the English colony in the Piazza di Spagna, and up by the Propaganda College and the Via di due Macelli; past the Piazza Barberini, and our friend the Triton, now stripped of his icy drapery, and past the usual allowance of villas and high vineyard walls and lofty shabby gateways, to the Porta Salara. The French sentinels always

stare at you as you go out and in at the gates, as if you were come to besiege the town. Strange, excitable, fussy little fellows are these French sentinels, with their red trousers, and their bayonets higher than themselves; and a strange comment on the state of things is their presence here, to enable a Christian clergyman to manage his own parish. But I am forgetting the interjection at the head of the present letter.

The road mounts very high to reach the Porta Salara, and outside it runs on a ridge, looking down over the Alban Hills through the openings on the right. How different are those hills now to their aspect a few days since! No more glorious sunshine—no more amber and purple lines—but a sullen indigo, varied here and there by the white mist of a snow-storm, leaving its glittering trace as it passes. No more gleaming lines of yellow and pink across the wide Campagna, but one dim rusty green, interrupted only by the old towers and tombs which loom black on its desolate surface. Yet still, how wild and beautiful! How unlike anything else on the face of the earth!

Much of our walk to-day lies by the side of the broad winding Tiber. The stranger to Rome usually

has a very erroneous idea of its river. I remember hearing the Tiber called 'a muddy ditch.' Yellow indeed it always is, and is bound to be, or it would not be the Tiber of the classic poets; but for size and stateliness it may rank high among European rivers. It is, for example, a far finer river than our Thames, bringing down a body of water considerably larger, and flowing with twice the rapidity. It is much more like the Severn, beyond compare the finest of the streams of England. Its banks are composed of fine crumbling sand, which falls in at every flood; in this particular, as a friend who has travelled in Egypt informed me, resembling the Nile, whose banks you may hear dropping in, piece by piece, as you glide down the stream at night.

At the Ponte Salaro we cross the Anio, hurrying from its leaps at Tivoli to join the Tiber. This, too, though small, is a fine river of its class, pouring along a full, busy stream of green water, with a power which always attracts and holds the eye.

And now the object of our day's expedition comes full in sight. On a line of low hills suddenly rising above our road on the right, we can trace sundry bits of rough ground, and a few dark holes, supposed to mark the site of the ancient Fidenæ. On the left

and opposite them springs up a lofty promontory, crowned with an old farmhouse, commonly known as Castel Giubileo, and supposed to answer to the Arx, or citadel of Fidenæ; which, however, from Livy's description of the siege and capture by the Romans, can hardly be. We push rapidly onward against the biting north-east wind; and, first climbing the last-mentioned promontory, stand in shelter of a buttress of the old house, and look around.

What a strange prospect opens before us! Once how full of life and conflict!—now, how entirely a prey to decay and solitude! At our feet the lordly Tiber winds, with many a sweeping curve, away to Rome, which bristles in the horizon with its domes and towers. It is hardly possible to imagine that two hundred thousand human beings are living and moving two leagues off. As we turn the eye northward, not a creature is seen, not a single habitation of man. Still, how memory peoples the waste! That stream, which, marking its devious valley with a line of bare wintry trees, enters the Tiber opposite to the marshy meadow under our feet, is the Cremera—name of fatal omen, and yet eloquent of heroic daring. On that stream the race of the Fabii, who had undertaken on their own account the war with the

people of Veii, perished, all, to the number of 306, being cut off by an ambush of the enemy.

Further to the right, another stream, more faintly marked, comes into the Tiber on the other side. That is the Allia, a name of even more fatal sound; for on its banks took place that great defeat by the Gauls which issued in the taking of Rome.

This scene surveyed, we descend again into the valley, and climb the lower opposite hill, which was evidently the site of Fidenæ. Here, as in several other places in the Campagna, we find mysterious ranges of rock-caverns communicating with one another, and opening into vast halls, now the stalls of cattle. It would seem that this was Fidenæ. Yet, how should these holes represent a city? Whence issued the legions which met the legions of Rome? Where are the walls—where the materials of the houses? One ruin only appears containing anything like masonry, and that apparently of the middle ages. Were these caves, hewn in the tufa, the ancient city? Then were the inhabitants little more than savages; then were the narratives of the historians impossible and self-contradicting. The whole matter is wrapped in impenetrable darkness.

The Forum is, perhaps, the one spot in Rome of

most endless and never-dying interest. Apart from all archæological questions, into which no intelligent mind can altogether abstain from entering, there is that in the old sites and ruined columns which brings one back again and again, even when other sights are to be seen. Many and many a morning have I spent there with my sketch-book, rather learning the ruins than representing them. Every sunny nook I know, and every haunt of deepest shade: there is not a stain on that weather-beaten arch of Septimius Severus, nor an irregularity in those plagiarised columns of the temple of Saturn (or is it of Vespasian?) that is not familiar to me: if the lightning should shiver one of the mouldered and blackened capitals, next time I walked down the Via del Campidoglio I should at once detect it. There is something exceedingly pleasant in thus getting any place, or any fact, into one's mind as part of one's self; especially when that place, or that fact, is worthy of being thus held fast and possessed. You may know your own cottage front, and every fir-tree pillar in your verandah, with its creeper of rose or of honeysuckle: but you are none the richer, though you may be the happier for it. But know every stone of such a scene as this, and you stand higher among

men—you possess a fountain of thought the more, and stand beside scenes whence spring the very conditions of the age in which you live.

But we have mounted through the Forum to the rising neck of land which bounded it on the south, and are standing under the arch of Titus. Here is one of those points of space where sacred and profane history meet, and we can witness with our own eyes to the truth of our Bibles. The vengeance of God on the city which crucified the Lord of Life is not only matter of prophecy,[1] nor only matter asserted in history: here we have it graven before our eyes by those who saw it. The Jewish captives are here with their seven-branched candlestick, and their table of shew-bread, and their long silver trumpets; and on the other side is the conqueror in his car of triumph. The interest of this venerable relic is surely not surpassed by any other in the world. While the waves of wild unbelief are rising and surging around us, it is good and cheering sometimes to reflect that they are beating upon not a few solid rocks like this, against which they can never

[1] See especially Matt. xxii. 7, xxiv. 2, and the parallel places in St. Mark and St. Luke; and consult the fifth book of 'The Wars of the Jews' in Josephus.

prevail, any more than they shall finally against God's Church and God's Word. When the unbeliever thinks he has swept away miracles and prophecy, and shaken the pretensions of the Son of God Himself, a crumbling stone like this shall suffice to put him to shame, and vindicate the ancient truth before a scoffing age. For let it never be forgotten, that the facts of Scripture history are so intimately interwoven with that which is supernatural and divine, that if the latter be questioned the former must be questioned with it: if the former be admitted, the latter follows in its wake. This has often been admirably pointed out: by none better than by the late Professor Blunt, in his remarkable lectures on the undesigned coincidences in Scripture.

Close on the right, above the arch of Titus, rises the Palatine, the first peopled and the most illustrious of all the seven hills of Rome. For ages, this ancient habitation of the Cæsars was nothing but a mass of shapeless ruins. The only portion of recognisable shape had received the unmeaning title of 'the baths of Livia,' without any reason. But this time has passed away. A considerable part of the land on the Palatine has been purchased by the

French Emperor, whose examinations have brought to light facts of immense interest. One of the gates of primitive Rome, the Porta Mugonia, has been discovered; vast portions of the palaces of Augustus and Tiberius have been brought to light; the library and banqueting-room, and nymphæum, with their marble floors, and some of their rich carvings, have one after another appeared; and at this time the workmen are still busy, and daily advancing in their removal of the superincumbent soil. Then, on the western side, a tract of land was bought by the Emperor of Russia, who, after making considerable excavations, presented the land to the Pope, on condition of their being continued. This work also is going on, and the discoveries here too have been of the highest interest. This situation is beneath the hill, toward the Circus Maximus, which occupied the valley between the Palatine and Aventine hills. The discoveries have consisted mainly of a series of offices and guard-rooms belonging to the great palace above. The decorations, somewhat rude of their kind, are still remaining here and there. But these rooms are made especially interesting by the fact that there exist, scratched on the walls, numerous names, writings, and rough drawings, by the soldiers

who were quartered there in the imperial times. Some of these are in Latin, but almost as many in Greek, which had in that day almost become the language of Rome. Among this latter number was one celebrated sketch of which my readers have no doubt heard ere now. It consists of the figure of a man with the head of an ass (or rather, perhaps, of a horse) stretched on a cross, while underneath a figure is kneeling as in prayer; and the writing is this: 'Alexamenos is worshipping (his) God.' Here again is an accidental notice, stamping with reality the early records of our holy religion. Time may come, when such evidence as this may become precious, and almost necessary, to us. I have said that this treasure *was* on the wall in one of these rooms. It was considered too valuable to remain exposed to casualties and to weather, and has, therefore, been removed to the museum of the Collegio Romano, by some of whose students I am told it was originally discovered.

Many of these inscriptions consist merely of the names of their writers. Others convey some recollection, or some personal notice. One I observed representing an ass, standing beside a mill which he is turning; this inscription being under:—'Do thou

labour, O ass, as I too have done; and in thy case it will be with profit to thyself;'[1] the complaint, as it would seem, of some over-wrought drudge, marched and countermarched under the broiling sun, laden as we know the Roman soldiers were. In several places are sketches of Roman soldiers; and once a person is represented, more elaborately clothed and ornamented; perhaps some great officer, or possibly even the Emperor himself.

In all the neighbourhood of the ruins, whether in Rome or in the Campagna, the soil is full of small pieces of the richest and rarest marbles. The larger fragments have long ago vanished into churches and palaces in Rome and elsewhere. There are some thousands of ancient columns now in the buildings of Rome. In all the older churches, the pillars supporting what we should call the clerestory are taken from old heathen temples. The rich panelling of marble, and the floor of inlaid patterns of the same rich material, in St. Peter's and the other larger churches, are laminæ cut from the *débris* of the gorgeous halls of the princes and senators of the imperial city. There is hardly a considerable house

[1] I owe this corrected version, which answers to my own rubbing of the inscription, to an unknown correspondent.

in Europe that is not enriched with some of the spoils, greater or lesser, of ancient Rome. And the quarry seems inexhaustible. Walk through any vineyard within the walls, or round any classic spot in the Campagna, and a few minutes will show you many specimens of beautiful marbles lying unnoticed around you. Frequently large masses are built into the walls which bound the fields as you pass out of the city, or glitter over the door of some obscure and dirty hovel. What must have been the magnificence—what mighty shocks must have shattered it into ruin! Even the very streets bear witness of it: I could point out stones in the common pavements, which have formed portions of the costly floors of serpentine and porphyry in other days.[1]

In these stray notes of matters which have struck me in Rome, the reader will pardon me if I sometimes pass incoherently from one subject to another. Rome has the curious disadvantage of being a city without a guide-book. What will Mr. Murray say,

[1] The reader may find stones of the rich green serpentine (so called in Rome) in the raised portion of the common paving, to the right of the road, in the street leading from the Palazzo Farnese to the Ponte Sisto. Again, the whole of the Vandyke pattern in the pavement fringing the bank of the Tiber over the ferry in the Ripetta, is composed of this same rare stone.

if he reads this assertion? But it is none the less true. Where is the stranger to learn all those details of interest, which he can easily obtain in other cities? These streets and lanes, with strange and bizarre names, or names involving historical facts, why are they so called? Who is to tell this, short of a professed antiquary? How is the stranger to obtain the information? These old mediæval towers, scattered up and down, these hundred palaces now without palatial inhabitants, where is their history collected? Every nook of London has been chronicled so that all may get at the knowledge. Might not such a work be undertaken with profit on behalf of Rome? In none of the ordinary maps are the smaller streets marked at all by their names: in none are the buildings and palaces (except the largest) characterized. Something in the manner of Walks through Rome, following and describing the streets, noting the smaller churches, the disused palaces, the sites of historical events of the middle ages and modern days, the best points of view, and the best times for seeing them, would be most acceptable to those visitors who, like myself, wish to leave nothing unexplored.

But it is quite time that I should say something

of those of the peculiar sights of Rome which have tempted to criticism, or given occasion to remarks different from those which others made; and have first, something of pictures.

I heard the principle enounced the other night by the most eminent English artist here, that the higher the character of a work of art, the fewer will of necessity be its admirers, and the less can the unprofessional world enter into its merits. I did not presume then, and I do not presume now, to combat the arguments by which he sought to substantiate this. I only venture to say now, as I said then, that it is, in matter of fact, most untrue. The uneducated mind may not be able to give one of the reasons for its admiration, but the truth is, that the very highest works of art of all kinds are, and ever will be, popular with the multitude. Many, it may be, admire because it is expected of them, because it puts them on a level with their betters, or because their heads have been filled with romantic nonsense; but putting aside all these, there will still be a very large residuum of persons uneducated in art, to whom works of art of the highest kind are a real and a genuine pleasure, and that *because* they are of the highest kind. I am stating what is correct in saying this. There is a

delicious feeling of pleasure which steals over the mind while we are contemplating the highest works of art, which is quite irrespective of any account we may be able to give of the principles on which they are constructed. The faint ebbing away of life in the (so-called) Gladiator; the calm refined majesty of the Apollo; the ripe and faultless beauty of the Capitoline Venus, find at once a response of hearty delight in the mind. We stand fixed before them, and recognise the creative hand of a master without knowing why, except that we feel the exquisite skill which has rendered, not the human body only, but the human soul, and has then found its reward by speaking to our souls also.

The Gladiator (rather the dying Gaulish chieftain), and the Apollo—which is the greater, and why? The same great artist answered the question at once, and decisively. He spoke of the dying Gaul as a mere representation of commonplace nature. Such a man, he told us, might any day be found among the peasantry; and the merit of the artist was, that he had given an exact representation of such a man; whereas the Apollo is an idealization; by which he explained that he meant an eclectic figure, combining the beauties of many actual human figures.

But, passing by the question whether this is really a satisfactory description of idealization, is the distinction, and is the preference, a just one? No one human body, he told us, is perfect; and therefore the artist, in producing his statue, takes from many models the part in which each excels, and combines them in one beautiful figure. But are we quite sure that this eclectic plasticism will always be kept within the limits of congruity? While the artist is combining his perfect neck with his perfect shoulder, are we quite certain that such a neck and such a shoulder may not, after all, turn out to have never been found in combination together? Many are the complications, many the mutual demands, of the associated parts of an organized frame; who shall presume to have penetrated all the complications,—who shall say that he has comprehended all the mutual demands? It seems to me not impossible that some of these highly vaunted eclectic statues may turn out after all to be mere Frankensteins—monsters which nature disowns—creations which a wild imagination might depict as pursuing their unfortunate creators through some weird realm of purgatory, incongruous by their very adaptation, hateful in their very loveliness, because made after no type which God has ever made.

The highest office of art is, it seems to me, to reproduce the highest type of Nature. Not, mind, to imitate servilely: not to exhibit merely what is seen by the dull and unintelligent; but to seize the very soul and central spark of glowing passion, to spread the encompassing calm of repose, to raise the mist of faint languor, or to place the spectator in the presence of the majesty of Death. And this by loyalty and absolute faithfulness to the dictation and requirements of Nature: not by lording it over her, but by obeying her: not by presuming to deal about among her works the epithets vulgar and commonplace, but by making even her meanest handywork the subject of humble and never-wearying study. Thus, and thus alone, shall we moderns follow in the steps of the great masters; thus only shall we avoid the falling into a dull and heartless conventionality, and mark out a path in which genius may assert its true functions, and real world-greatness may be achieved.

And now from generals to particulars. Unquestionably, the greatest picture in Rome, if not in the world, is Raffaelle's Transfiguration (so-called). Let me set down the results of more than one session before this last and highest work of the great master.

I will presume that my readers are familiar with the picture by means of the engravings of it which are everywhere to be found. They will remember that at first sight it appears to consist of two parts: in the upper of which our Lord is seen in glory, floating in the air over the Mount of Transfiguration, with Moses and Elias, while on the mount are the three favoured Apostles: in the lower, the possessed child is brought to the Apostles to be healed, amidst a multitude of persons. On this circumstance those shallow critics who are ever ready to carp at what they do not understand, have grounded a censure of the picture, as comprising two separate springs of action, or motives, as they are technically called. But all such criticism is at once answered, when we observe that two of the apostles below are pointing upwards to the Lord; thus interpreting the whole idea of the picture to be, that there is no healer of our human suffering but Christ Himself. And this consideration immediately shows that the subject is not, properly speaking, the Transfiguration as an historical fact, but 'Christus Consolator,' 'Christ the Healer of men;' and that the picture is an exquisite adaptation of an event in our Lord's course on earth to the expression of this idea.

As regards details, our Lord's figure is sublime, without being superhuman: it indicates conflict yet to come, suffering yet to be gone through, and still it glows with the transient ray of the glory of which He had emptied himself to become man: 'They spake of His decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.'

Of the figures of Moses and Elias, we may say that Moses, resigned and self-abnegating, looks forward with a holy intent gaze on the glorified One,—on Him who was the end of the law for righteousness. The motive of Elias is not quite so clear, he seems to look partly at Moses, as if to bind on himself to the law, as both law and prophets received their fulfilment in Christ.

Of the three Apostles who are seen on the mount, St. James is crouched on the ground in intense prayer, as being the first to drink the cup of suffering through which he was to come to glory: St. Peter almost painfully wards the light from his upturned eyes, ever ready to gaze onward, ever first to shrink from the realities of the vision: St. John looks down, rapt in the glory, having it in his heart rather than in his outer gaze, yet shading even that heart with his hand over his brow; his other arm, stretched out

over the multitude beneath, may be a symbolic link in the picture.

The figures below, in their variety of action, all contribute to the great moral of the whole. The convulsed child is the centre here, as the Lord is above. In the faces of the Apostles we have, variously expressed and admirably combined, sympathy, inability to help, direction to Him who is over them. In the left-hand corner of the picture, one Apostle is lamenting to another, while that other points, exactly in the same direction and in a line with the other more prominent figure, up to Christ. Observe another Apostle, also in this left-hand corner, seated on a dried trunk of a tree (itself symbolic), consulting the book of the law, and expressing by his gesture that the help was not to be found there.

In the right-hand group, various motives are expressed: earnest entreaty, deep compassion (this latter in the two women; are they the mother and sister of the boy?); in others reproach: one man with outstretched hand, as it were defying the Apostles, while another, a Jewish Rabbi apparently, lifts his two hands in contempt, as who should say, 'Is it all come to this?' Another crouches beneath, ready to see which turn things will take, and to rule

himself accordingly. In the back-ground are more men and women, repeating more or less the examples set them by the more prominent ones. Am I wrong in suspecting that the painter had a separate and deep meaning to be expressed by each figure in each group, and that continued study would enable us to detect it?

How beautiful a thought it is, and how refreshing, that this picture was Raffaelle's last employment; that this linking of man's suffering with Christ's glory was in his thoughts as they sunk into the torpor of approaching death, and that this, his great triumph in art, was borne before his remains as they were taken to their resting-place in the Pantheon. Thus we may well wish, may he, who drank deeper of beauty than his fellow-men, have found consolation in our glorified Lord.

I may be permitted to append to these crude remarks the opinion of no less a critic than Goethe, which I met with after they had been written: 'It must ever,' he says, 'be matter of wonder that any one can have doubted of the grand unity of such a conception as this. In the absence of the Lord, the disconsolate parents bring a possessed boy to the disciples of the Holy One. They seem to have been

making attempts to cast out the Evil Spirit; one has opened a book, to see whether by chance any spell were contained in it which might be successful against this plague, but in vain. At this moment appears He who alone has the power, and appears transfigured in glory. They remember His former mighty deeds; they instantly point aloft to the vision as the only source of healing. How can the upper and lower parts be separated? Both are one: beneath is Suffering, craving for aid; above is active Power and helpful Grace. Both refer to one another; both work in one another. Those who, in our dispute over the picture, thought with me, confirmed their view by this consideration: Raffaelle, they said, was ever distinguished by the exquisite propriety of his conceptions. And is it likely that this painter, thus gifted by God, and everywhere recognisable by the excellence of this His gift, would, in the full ripeness of his powers, have thought and painted wrongly? Not so; he is, as Nature is, ever right, and then most truly and deeply right when we least suspect it.'—*Works*, iii. p. 33.

IV.

FROM ROME.

OME expositors of the Apocalypse interpret the sublime description of the opening of the sixth seal as referring to the downfall of Paganism in the time of Constantine. To this interpretation there are many, and to my mind insuperable objections. But to them all, we may add this: *What if Paganism have* NEVER FALLEN?

The Church of Rome calls itself Christian: the city of Rome gives itself out as the metropolis of the Christian world. And doubtless the Church of Rome is based upon Christianity, and the city of Rome is full of Christian names and Christian emblems. But notwithstanding, a strong conviction possesses me, that what really happened in the much-vaunted reign of Constantine was really a victory of Paganism, not

a defeat. It was with idolatry, as with Greece—'Græcia capta ferum victorem cepit:' 'The captive Greece her victor captive led.' And this conviction has been wrought irresistibly in me by what I have seen and heard during a winter in Rome.

Rome is essentially a Pagan city. Her churches, numerous as the days of the year, rise everywhere around you. Bells are continually going: the commemoration of saints and martyrs is endless. Yet, with very rare exceptions indeed, the *worship of the people* in those churches has nothing in common with Christianity. It is not even the one God of Jews and Christians who, as matter of fact, is adored in them: it is not He whom Christians believe to be God blessed for ever, incarnate in the flesh of man. God has passed out from the practical worship of this people: the Son of God has, as matter of fact, ceased to be an object of their adoration. The Eternal Father is found in their pictures as an old man,—the Divine Saviour as a little child; but both are subservient, and nearly all their worship is subservient, to one purpose: to the glorification of a great goddess, and, after her, not of the Father, Son, nor Spirit, but of a host of men and women, made into objects of adoration by themselves, and, what-

ever may be alleged to the contrary, clothed, as she is pre-eminently clothed, with the incommunicable attributes of the Godhead itself.[1]

I know I am making strong assertions. But the facts themselves are stronger. I shall have to adduce them, somewhat in abundance, by and by. But now I will go on to say more.

The Jewish Church had fallen far in the time of our Lord's ministry on earth. But the Romish Church has fallen further now. The demon of idolatry had been cast out by the judgment of the Captivity. His habitation had been left empty and garnished: and he had returned, not in the same form, but in the worse shape, of hypocrisy. In the system of the modern Church of Rome, not only are hypocrisy and lying tolerated and encouraged, but idolatry, gross as that of Nineveh or Greece, and grosser than that of Imperial Rome, has entered in and repossessed her people.

More is yet behind. There is hardly a charge brought by our blessed Lord against the Scribes and

[1] The reader will please to notice, that I am speaking, not of liturgies and professions, but of *matter of fact*. So that when the *Dublin Review*, as I expected, answers my statement by appeals to the language and acts of the officiating priests, its answer is entirely beside the purpose.

Pharisees in St. Matthew xxiii. which does not find examples among the priesthood of modern Rome. The binding on men heavy burdens, which they themselves touch not; the inordinate lust for distinction and outward display; the shutting up the kingdom of Heaven against men, neither going in themselves, nor suffering them that would enter to go in: the devouring widows' houses, and for a pretence making long prayers; the compassing sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, making him twofold worse than themselves; the drawing false and unwarranted distinctions between sins venial and sins deadly; the frittering away the religious life upon contemptible trifles, and omitting the weightier matters of the law,—straining out the gnat, while they swallow the camel; the making clean the outside of the cup and platter, while within they are full of extortion and excess; the building and garnishing the sepulchres of the martyrs, while they themselves are treading in the steps of their persecutors: all these might have been first written as descriptions of the character and conduct of the priesthood, and priestly rulers, of modern Rome. There are exceptions; and, thank God, not a few. But these are exceptions, likewise, to the system. A *good priest* is,

as the word is now understood, a *bad Catholic.* The system, as now laid down, and now practised, is one of hypocrisy, of extortion, of falsehood, of cruelty. 'The preaching is of cursing and lies;' the practice, such as I shall have to show before this letter is done.

But it may be well to begin by speaking of outward and palpable things—the fruits by which the priestly government must be judged and known. And first, for the peace and security of the city. To insure these, is the bounden duty of every government. There may be cases where it is extremely difficult: where the magistrates are hampered in power, or the people brutalized by ages of bad government; but neither of these can be the case at Rome. Here we have the most absolute monarch in the world, ruling a capital by no means large, with a numerous staff of military and police; and, besides, assisted by 20,000 French troops. And besides this, we have here a people whose state, physical, moral, and intellectual, is the result of accumulated centuries of a government and institutions, according to the advocates of the Papacy, the best in the world, and administered by infallible wisdom, unerring justice, spotless integrity, and un-

impeachable truth. How, then, does it stand with Rome in point of security and good order?

Unquestionably, in both these points, it is the worst city in the civilized world. And it is so, not in spite of the honest efforts of its rulers, but with the connivance, and, it is much to be feared, often with the concurrence, of its rulers. Robbery and murder are the commonest occurrences in the streets of Rome; detection, restitution, punishment, are occurrences the most uncommon.

In order to furnish a characteristic and instructive example, it may not be amiss to give somewhat in detail the narrative of a case of street-murder which occurred during this present spring, and has made a deep impression on all classes and parties.

Two young men, clerks in the Exchange-office of Sig. Baldini, opposite the Chigi Palace in the Corso, had long been in the habit of carrying the money of the day home to their master's bank every evening. They always went in the same hired carriage, and by the same way. On Saturday, February 20, 1864, they were passing in this carriage and on this business, at half-past seven o'clock, up the street called the Via in Lucina. They were at a point not more than seventy paces from the Corso itself, out of which the

Via in Lucina turns at a right angle. At that time, and especially on a Saturday evening, the Corso is usually crowded with people: and every night as soon as it is dusk, Papal and French patrols are stationed along its whole length, at the distance of a few paces apart. Such were the attendant circumstances of time and place.

At the point above mentioned, the Via in Lucina suddenly narrows, having passed an eating-shop, which projects into it and faces the Corso. A few steps beyond the corner of this house, and opposite to its side entrance, the two clerks were attacked by six armed men, dragged out of their carriage, and literally cut to pieces on the pavement. One of them died on the spot; the other, in the hospital early next morning. The sum carried off by the robbers was 8500 Roman scudi (upwards of £1700). Of course they escaped, and up to this time have not been taken.[1]

[1] A clerical friend of mine found himself during this summer (1864) in a railway carriage, with a sleek well-bred Romish ecclesiastical dignitary for his only companion. My friend was reading this article; and after travelling some miles in silence, he bethought him that it would be courteous to address some words to his fellow-traveller. 'Rome, sir,' he said, 'seems to be rather in an unsafe and unsettled state.' 'Unsafe, sir?' was the reply: 'there is not a quieter or more contented place on earth. Any one may walk by day or night, from one end of

Why '*of course?*' Let the following facts reply to the question. First of all, there is, sad to say, a general conviction, that the police themselves are, if not sometimes the perpetrators of these outrages, at least cognizant of them, and sharers in the plunder. No one who knows anything of the history of street-outrage in Rome will be surprised at such, right or wrong, being the impression on the public mind. It is well known that the police can, whenever it pleases them, find out the stolen goods and restore them.[1] It is also well known, that in other cases, no amount

Rome to another, without fear of violence or insult. In London, now, I do fear for my life and property: but in Rome, never. I reside there: and never hesitate to walk the streets alone at all hours.' 'But, sir,' replied my friend, 'this book which I have been reading gives a different account. I there find that two commercial clerks were robbed and murdered in a carriage only this last spring.' 'Well, sir,' was the answer, 'I was resident in Rome all last winter and spring, and had the best opportunity for hearing all the news; and I can most certainly assure you that nothing of the kind ever happened.'

I record here this audacious falsehood—(1.) because it furnishes an admirable illustration of the Appendix of Father Newman's *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, in which he maintains that a lie may be told *for a just cause:* and shows what sort of cause a high authority in the Romish Church believes to be a just one: and (2.) because it is only a fair specimen of the way in which facts, notorious at Rome, are systematically denied by Roman Catholics in England.

[1] A brother of Cardinal Antonelli was robbed; the next day the police restored the whole of the property.

of the clearest evidence is sufficient to bring a criminal to justice. Indeed, the very name of Justice is wrongly used when predicated of any proceeding in the courts of law at Rome. All is secret, all is arbitrary, all is venal. Any length of time may elapse between apprehension and trial, during which time evidence may be suppressed in a hundred ways, or, if it be worth the trouble, false evidence suborned.

Connected with this arbitrary method of proceeding, is another cause why the robbers escaped free. To give evidence, in Rome, is rather worse than to be accused. The unfortunate passer-by who witnesses a crime, is summoned from day to day, when there is no prospect of the case being judged: is compelled to attend without any compensation for his time, and if he is known to have given evidence tending to inculpate, becomes a marked victim for the future revenge of the assassin. Hence, not unnaturally, the universal practice among the Romans is, when anything unusual occurs in the street, to turn out of the way instantly, that they may not witness it. On the commission of the bloody deed above related, the street was instantly empty, and the poor victims were left without help, while the robbers got safe off.

As may be conceived, the public indignation at such an atrocious outrage has been raised to the highest. That in a city with two police establishments, numbering many thousand men, and garrisoned by 20,000 French soldiers, that common safety for life and property should not be attained, which the presence of a few dozen policemen insures in many a city in England, implies great blame somewhere or other. The members of the police force are notoriously disreputable; the government itself is known to be corrupt; criminals escape, and are sheltered: what wonder, if the most damaging inferences are drawn; what wonder if, day by day, the cup of public indignation is filling to the brim, and demanding the expulsion from power of a prince and his satellites who do not choose to fulfil the very first conditions of the tenure of power?

On this occasion, as on every other when its conduct has been called in question, the Papal Government attempted to throw dust in men's eyes. Immediately after the murder, two men were arrested, who were not the murderers. Rome was quieted for a few days, and the escape of the real criminals, we may believe, has been thus secured.

Meantime, the Secret National Committee of moderate liberals have addressed to the French General in command a respectful and temperate letter, representing to him that if it is necessary, for high reasons of state, that the Romans should, by 20,000 bayonets, be prohibited from putting themselves under a better government, at least those who thus prohibit them should provide for the public security. If, being so well able to do this, they do it not, they make themselves accomplices of the corrupt and incompetent power which their presence here tends to shore up and prolong.

Rome, they urge, has become, by invitation and encouragement of the priestly government, the resort of the very dregs of mankind. The guilty, the disaffected, the poltroons who escape the military levies, the reactionary Neapolitans, all find welcome here. It is known for a fact, that priests who have been compelled to fly from the kingdom of Italy, not for political reasons, but for the foulest and most revolting crimes against nature, are harboured and favoured here. Rome, in its present state, is a disgrace to Christendom, and a blot upon humanity itself.

I state these things in the fulfilment of a solemn duty. The interests and the immortal hopes of

thousands are at stake in this matter. Those of whom I am bringing up the evil report, are consummate masters of the arts of finesse and intrigue. They can, and they do, deny whatever it suits them to deny. In England, their partisans adopt the plan of meeting with a direct negative, whenever it is safe to do so, any assertions which may be made respecting corrupt practices here at Rome. Here, in Rome, the most atrocious falsehoods are printed in the Papal journals respecting England, her institutions, the spirit of her government, the state of her population. They know that they are safe in making their assertions. No reply can be inserted in any public organ (if this name can be given to the two miserable daily prints sent forth by the Government), without sanction of the rulers, which is sure to be refused. 'From what we hear and read in the papers,' said a Roman to a friend of mine, 'England must be a perfect hell upon earth!'[1]

The lamentable part of the matter for an Englishman who witnesses all this is, not the hearing his beloved country thus traduced (for when he once

[1] Let any one contrast with the incidents of the murder above related, the pursuit, capture, trial, and execution of Müller, and the complete vindication of English justice by his confession on the scaffold.

knows the men, blame from them becomes the richest praise, as praise from them would indeed be cause of shame), but it is to see his ingenuous countrymen and countrywomen taking in with all simplicity the false and honeyed words of these bad men : to see silly girls, only half trained at home in the Christian faith, drawn by degrees into their nets, till they are hopelessly and fatally entangled : to hear, in general society, the most exalted encomiums passed on men whose lives and words are deserving of anything rather than praise ; and every now and then to hear of this or that weak and miserable person forsaking the faith, and 'going over' to worship images, and believe delusions, and uphold the monstrous lie of modern Romanism.

There is another element in the safe escape of the robbers, so characteristic of this modern Romanism, that it deserves a word of notice. Before the perpetration of their crime, they take care to have their passports prepared, and at once, on its commission, make for the frontier. But how to obtain this pass port? The law of the Roman Church requires that every man should confess and receive the Communion (*i.e.*, as much of it as that Church gives to her members, if they be laymen) at Easter. If this

have not been done, no passport can be obtained. But there are many persons who either neglect, or object, to receive the Communion altogether, or do not choose to receive it at the hands of such priests as are commonly found here. If these persons wished to leave Rome, they would be at once stopped by the difficulty, that a passport would not be granted them. The way in which this difficulty is got over is truly curious and worthy of note. Every one who receives the Sacrament at Easter, has a certificate to that effect given him by the administering priest. The practice accordingly is this: Some one person receives it many times, obtains a corresponding number of certificates, and sells them to those who may happen to want them. And thus fraud, in the most solemn matters, is generated and perpetuated.

And now I will ask my reader to accompany me into some of the Roman churches; and while we are there, he shall judge for himself whether or not the words used in the beginning of this letter are true.

We will first enter the fine church of S. Maria sopra Minerva. The time shall be Christmas-eve. Let it be observed that we are in no common church,

and in the presence of no common body of men: this is the head-quarters of the Dominicans, and the general of the order resides here. Those voices, roughly and uproariously intoning and responding (as the manner is here), out of sight in their winter choir behind the altar, are no ignorant country choir, no unlettered body in some far off province: what we see here, we may depend on it, is the best, or of the best, of its kind. This is important for the end which we have in view.

After perhaps an hour of service of different kinds, in which the people take no part whatever, we see, by the stir which is going on, and the passing out and in between the winter choir and the sacristy, that something is about to be done. At last a silken canopy appears, borne on four poles at the corners. A priest goes up to the altar, and lifts a white cloth, which had previously during the service been concealing something beneath, as is the case on the Communion Table of our English churches, when the elements about to be consecrated are placed there before Morning Prayer. And now, if my English reader had been present, I believe he would have felt what I felt,—a glow of shame heating his cheek,—shame for our disgraced Christianity,—shame

for our very nature itself,—when the object thus reverently concealed proved to be a wax doll, about eighteen inches in length. This the priest took in his arms with gestures of reverence ; and it was borne round the church, under the canopy, in solemn procession, with candles held by each Dominican. When the head of the procession reached the end of what we in England should call the south aisle (churches in Rome are built without regard to east and west), he stood still, and faced down the aisle. Each member of the body, as he came up, having given his candle into the hand of an attendant, who extinguished it, reverently approached the doll, kissed its toes, and, bowing, touched them with his forehead. Nor was this all. When every one in the procession had done this, the priest delivered the doll to another, apparently inferior in rank, who took it to a side altar, over which was a *presepé*, a representation of the manger, with St. Joseph and St. Mary. In this manger the doll was eventually deposited ; but, first, a rail was run out into the church, like the rail at which our communicants kneel, and at that rail the people flocking knelt by relays, while the doll was carried round again and again, each person, as the Dominicans had done, kissing

its toes, and touching them reverently with the forehead.

It is impossible to conceive a more disgusting, or a more instructive exhibition. Disgusting, for the reasons which I have already mentioned: instructive, because such a thing as this tears the veil off from the decent semblance which Romanism takes care to present when on its trial before public opinion, and gives the lie to a hundred specious assertions of perverters and perverted. No introduction to Roman rites can be better than this for an ingenuous English mind, disposed to take what is falsely called a charitable view of Rome's corruptions of Christian doctrine and practice. The real strength of a system, as of a machine, is to be measured by its weakest part; and it is a wholesome truth to bear in mind, that the real character of Romanism is to be sought, not in the best sermon one may hear, nor in the simplest and least objectionable rite,—but in these its lower and more revolting idolatries, not tolerated only for the sake of the commonalty, but practised and sanctioned, as we have seen, by the regularly organized and more learned bodies in the Church.

A friend of mine was talking with a well-known pervert, who is the chosen organ of the Papacy for

decoying away the English visitors at Rome from the faith of Christ. In the course of argument, my informant pressed this adoration of the Bambino (or *baby*: so the wax doll is called): on which he received this reply:—'I have not seen it, and know nothing of it.'

Now, if these words, or words to this effect, were used, a remarkable fact comes to light: that one of the most esteemed champions of modern Romanism ignores, and has no sympathy with, a rite of his Church, performed at a most solemn season, and sanctioned by the presence and participation of that Church's rulers. So much in disproof (if indeed any disproof were necessary) of the much-vaunted unbroken unanimity and uniformity of practice of modern Romanists.

A great stir has been made this winter in Rome about Renan's notorious book. Knowing what no one who observes can help knowing about the state of belief here, it is somewhat curious that such should have been the case. But very often, the less the reality is present, the more vigorous is the effort to keep up the semblance.

It is not however for the sake of making this remark that I have noticed the circumstance, but on

account of a placard which I observed on the walls in connexion with this movement against Renan. A book was advertised, entitled, 'A prayer to our Lord Jesus Christ to avenge the outrages which are committed against His Divine Majesty.' And this in Rome! Where, it may be asked, is that Divine Majesty more outraged than here? Here, where the worship and the mention of our Blessed Lord, are, at ordinary times, almost altogether superseded? It is surely needless to observe to any visitor in a Roman Catholic country in our own days, that the Madonna has, as matter of fact, usurped the place of her Divine Son, and even of the whole Three Persons in the Holy Trinity.[1] With nine-tenths of living Romanists, the whole of the faith once delivered to the saints is set aside, and is as if it had never been; and this goddess-worship (for such it is in reality) has taken its place. Everything is done by, everything is sought from, the Madonna. As to our Blessed Lord, He is but a helpless Infant in her arms. The burden of their prayers to her is, to show herself to be a mother, and command Him to do this and that. By an atro-

[1] It is futile to attempt to reply to this assertion of *matter of fact*, by citation from liturgies, and statements as to what is going on at solemn times in churches. I am speaking, in the text, of the religion of the *people*.

cious misinterpretation of Holy Scripture, *she* is set forth as the destined bruiser of the serpent's head, and representations of her are constantly found in the act of doing this *by herself*, without His co-operation or aid. By the last great innovation on Christian doctrine, the fiction of the Immaculate Conception, our Lord has been virtually deprived of all share in the Redemption of mankind, and she has been substituted in His place. If she were indeed free from all stain of sin from her birth, then she, and not her Son, was the second and righteous Head of our human nature: and Christ was born, and lived, and died in vain, or only to increase her glory. When was ever a greater outrage committed against His Divine Majesty than the assertion of this monstrous doctrine?

And what has been the fruit of this in the talk and the practice of the people? Let me repeat here an anecdote which has been before in print, and which I have from the author of the book in which it is told. 'One of the workmen in a studio in Rome, having become enraged, began to swear so violently, "*Per Cristo*," "*Sangue di Cristo*," "*Maladetto sangue di Cristo*," that a friend of mine, a Protestant, shocked at his profanity, and peculiarly offended by the oath,

which is terrible to English ears, assumed the task of admonishing him: "Do you forget who Christ is, that you thus blaspheme Him?" "Bah," answered the man, "I'm not afraid of *Him* (*non ho paura di lui!*)." "Whom, then, *do* you fear?" pursued my friend. "*Vi diro*, I will tell you," was the answer of the man, as he approached the questioner, and whispered in his ear, "*Ho paura della Madonna, ma non di lui:*—I'm afraid of the Madonna, but not of Him!"'—(*Roba di Roma*, ii. 220.)

This is but a fair specimen of the result, in the popular mind, of the dethronement of our Blessed Lord by Romanism, and the substitution of a mere creature in His place. And indeed how should it be otherwise? In the regular daily prayers said in the schools (I speak from having heard them as prescribed by authority, in one of the Asili d'Infanzia), the name of our Lord does not once occur. The little children, crossing themselves and joining their hands, are made to say, thrice over, the Lord's prayer (in Latin, not one word of which they understand), and the Ave Maria, or salutation of the angel to the Blessed Virgin; the latter containing words of deep historic interest and import as used by him, but, as a prayer in the mouth of a Christian,

utterly devoid of any meaning whatever. And in all this not one word of the Lord Jesus Christ! Should He arise to avenge His outraged majesty, where will the blow first and mainly descend?

And while on this weighty matter let me add another remark. Should any be disposed to reply to what has been said, by alleging that the fact of the presence of the divine Child in His mother's arms, and the occurrence of the crucifix as an object of adoration (though this latter is but rare at Rome in comparison with the images and pictures of the Madonna), are sufficient proofs of our Blessed Lord being still in His place of honour in Romish worship, let me say thus much in rejoinder: To honour our Blessed Lord, is to honour Him as He now is—exalted at God's right hand to be our Prince and our Saviour. We adore, not facts in His life of humiliation, but Himself in His present glory. For these former, we bless and praise Him, and thankfully commemorate them; but we do not, and we must not now, worship Him as an Infant, or as hanging on His cross. If we are of His Church, He is ever with us, even to the end of the world: not in the mere historical verity of the past, but in the living verity of the present. To worship Him *now* as an

Infant, to worship Him *now* as in the act of being crucified, is to worship Him as He is not at this present time,—to worship Him not as He has revealed Himself to us for our grace and help, to worship Him not according to His command, but according to our own imaginations: is, in fact, not an act of Christian worship at all, but of fond idolatry, be the image before the eye, or before the mind. The Jesus whom we worship, is God, in our glorified nature, sitting at the right hand of the Father, and as our High Priest making intercession for us. Him in His Person, as He is, we worship, and not otherwise.

Let me go on to speak of pictures and images: not separately, but in one, and under one category; for when worship is in question, I know of no difference between them. Cardinal Wiseman, in his little decoy-novel *Fabiola*, has the following curious passage. 'The gods and goddesses have been all smashed, pulverised? As I have grown older, I have grown wiser: and I have come to the conclusion that Mr. Jupiter and Mrs. Juno are no more gods than you or I: so I summarily got rid of them.'

'Yes,' the interlocutor replies, 'that may be very well: and I, though neither old nor wise, have been

long of the same opinion. But why not retain them as works of art?'

'Because they had been set up here not in that capacity, but as divinities. They were here as impostors, under false pretences: and as you would turn out of your house any bust or image found among those of your ancestors, but belonging to quite another family, so did I these pretenders to a higher connexion with me, when I found it false. Neither could I run a risk of their being bought for the continuance of the same in future.'

I call this a curious passage, not that it bears on the general question of representing real objects of worship by images (for the upholding of which the reader will perceive that a loophole is cleverly left), but because it applies so exactly to the *present practice* (whatever the conventional theory may be) of the worshippers of images here and in other Roman Catholic countries. This practice, in patent and undeniable matter of fact, is *to worship the image*, not as an aid to the worship of the unseen person represented by it, but as *being itself a god or goddess*, having will and power, separately existent and separately prayed to and had recourse to. For any one here in Rome, or in any Roman Catholic country,

no proof of this is needed. The fact, that one image is regarded as holier or more efficacious than another, is of itself sufficient proof. If, as they pretend, images are only aids to bring the thing represented before the mind's eye, then one might do this more effectually than another, but in no case could we have agency or potency attributed to an image or picture. Yet winking images, miracle-working images, speaking images, are among the very commonest tricks of this degraded priesthood, and are implicitly believed in by the people. The miraculous picture of the Madonna in the church of S. Maria del Popolo is to wink at a given time, and did wink accordingly. The picture of the same (also given out as painted by St. Luke, though they know well that all the pictures so reputed are Byzantine works of the middle ages) in SS. Cosmas and Damian in the Forum, is declared by an inscription in the church to have spoken to Gregory the Great, and reproved him, when he once passed it without doing reverence.[1]

[1] This having been once denied by Romanists in England, I give the inscription, *as it stands*, on the right hand of the entrance to the church: 'L'imagine di Maria Santissima che esiste all' altar maggiore parlò a S. Gregorio Papa dicendogli. Perchè più non mi saluti mentre passando eri solito salutarmi,

On the 31st of March of the present year, it was my fortune to pay a visit to the miraculous picture of the Madonna at Vicovaro, near Tivoli. I had intended to go to Horace's Villa at Licenza, but was prevented, by the state of the roads, from advancing further than Vicovaro. For this I am not sorry, as it enabled me to witness with my own eyes what I shall now describe.

Outside the church was a stall, at which I bought a copy of a hymn addressed by the inhabitants of the town, 'to their miraculous picture of the most Holy Mary our Advocate, which, on July 22, 1863, began to move its eyes miraculously.' Then follows the hymn, which is poor enough. Inside the church, over the high altar, surrounded with decorations and with lights, is placed the picture, a beautiful one, full of feeling and pathos. The hands are lightly united as in prayer, and the face is turned upwards, the eyes being large and lustrous, and in the very act of beginning to weep. It is a work of the school of Guido, and might be by the master himself.

Before the altar rails were kneeling a group of *contadini*, or country people, on their way from the Easter

il Santo domandò perdono e concesse a quelli che celebrano in quell' altare la liberazione dell' anima dal purgatorio, civé per quell' anima per la quale si celebra la Messa.'

services at Rome. The priest was kneeling at the altar, singing the Litany of the Virgin, in which she is addressed in direct prayer, 'Mother of mercy, have mercy on us!' 'Mother of grace, have mercy upon us,' etc.: the *contadini* repeating the '*Miserere nobis*' after each title of invocation had been given out by the priest.[1]

This being ended, the worshippers all bent down and kissed the pavement, and then went backwards out of the church, bowing repeatedly as they passed down the long nave.

Meantime we were invited into the sacristy to see the book of testimonials to the fact of the miracle. The witnesses were many, of all nations. The purport of their testimony was mainly this: that at such

[1] This statement has been questioned, by some who suppose that the direct invocation, '*Miserere nobis*,' '*Have mercy upon us*,' is reserved in Roman Catholic litanies for the Divine Persons. But the fact was so: and I directed the attention of my party to it, repeated as it was many times in our hearing. The fact is, that *every attribute* of God Himself is uniformly transferred to her. I have seen a 'Prayer to Mary,' issued by authority, parodying the Lord's Prayer, 'Our Mother which art in heaven,' etc. The whole Psalter, as is well known, has been parodied in a like manner, her name being everywhere substituted for that of Jehovah. In the Catechism of the Council of Trent, Part IV. ch. vi. qu. 4 is entitled, '*How we may pray the Saints to have mercy upon us?*' and it is explained by the trumpery evasion that when we do, we merely mean *that they should pray to God* to have mercy upon us!

a time (one was dated but a week previous, March 23, 1864) the deposer had seen the left, or the right eye, or both, move or enlarge, or fill with tears; or the expression of the face change, or the throat become agitated; many of the depositions were accompanied with fervent expressions of thankfulness and joy.

Now as to the account to be given of the phenomena thus deposed to. It is well known that certain arrangements of lines and of colours cause the appearance, when long contemplated, of unsteadiness and of motion in a picture: especially if combined with the representation of an expression of countenance itself emotional, and, if I may thus use the word, transitional. Now this last is eminently the case with the picture at Vicovaro. I am convinced, that were I a devotee kneeling before that picture, I could in ten minutes imagine it to undergo any such change as those recorded in the book. All is engaging, uncertain, lustrous, suggestive. Those who know (and who at Rome does not know?) the beautiful 'La Speranza' by Guido (?) in the Sacristy of S. Pietro in Vincoli,[1] will quite understand what I mean. I have an instance in the Deanery at Canterbury of the effect

[1] Now at Rome no longer. It was sold this year to an Englishman, and is now in this country.

of certain colours in producing the appearance of motion. The portrait of one of the early Deans, if steadily looked at for a few seconds, will any day begin to move its eyes, not miraculously, but in the ordinary course of the laws of colour.

Now these things being so, what can be more disgraceful than the imposture which is here and elsewhere practised on the devout and ignorant? Practised, not in a corner, nor by a few priests for their private gain, but under the immediate sanction of the princes of the Church, and of her sovereign Pontiff? I was shown in the sacristy, rich presents which had been sent by the Pope himself in recognition of the great miracle. Moreover, in the book of testimonials I read with shame one written by a person who was once an English clergyman, but now holds a distinguished position in the Papal Court. Educated as this deposer must have been, it is really astonishing how he can either be duped by, or lend himself to, this ridiculous fraud. For one or other of these alternatives must be the case: and, to my mind, it is impossible to conceive a degradation deeper than the former of them, except the latter.[1]

[1] If I am not misinformed, another name may be found there, interesting to many English at Rome. It might be well to

When this 'miracle' at Vicovaro began, the example became rapidly contagious in Rome. The streets are full of Madonnas, and these, here and there, began to wink and move. But our friends the French, more zealous for decorum than its proper guardians at Rome, had them plastered up, and nipped in the bud this promising speculation.

Accompany me into the church of St. Agostino, the Methodist meeting-house, so to speak, of Rome, where the extravagance of the enthusiasm of the lower orders is allowed freer scope than in the more genteel churches. Enter at either of the doors in the Piazza di St. Agostino, look to the right or left, according to which door you enter, and what do you see? a tawny marble image of the Virgin, with the child in her arms. Both Virgin and child are covered, smothered, with jewels, votive offerings of those whose prayers the image has heard and answered. All round the image the walls are covered with votive offerings likewise; some of a similar kind—jewels, watches, valuables of different descriptions. (Some are bold to say that the jewels which we see are not real, but only the imitations in paste of the original

ascertain whether the writer repudiates winking images as he did the worship of the Bambino.

60473

offerings, themselves disposed of by the priests. I know not how that may be, but only in this case report general rumour.) Some offerings again consist of pictures, representing, generally in the rudest way, some sickness or accident, cured or averted by the appearance in the clouds of the Madonna, as seen in the image. Almost the whole side of the church is covered, from near the pavement to near the roof, with these highly curious productions.

But look at the human tenants of this, I can hardly call it Christian, church. See them coming up to the image one after another, reverently kissing the foot, which is nearly worn away by the multitudes of devotees, and touching it with their foreheads; then, dipping a finger in the oil of the lamp which burns before the idol, they go their way from the church. The people of quality, I forgot to mention, carefully wipe with their handkerchiefs the toe before they bring it into contact with their lips or foreheads.

'THOU SHALT NOT BOW DOWN TO THEM, NOR WORSHIP THEM.' How do they get over this, and indeed the whole of this second Commandment? rejoins some ingenious English reader. How? Why, simply by expunging it from the Decalogue. Such audacity can hardly be believed. I have heard of

Roman Catholics in England denying it, as is their wont, when any of their corrupt practices are asserted by a person not ready with his proof.

Here, then, *is* the proof, taken from the *Dottrina Cristiana*, the authorized manual of instruction used in Rome. *Q.* 'How many are the commandments of God?' *A.* 'Ten.' *Q.* 'Say the Ten Commandments.' *A.* '1. I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt not have another God before me. 2. Thou shalt not take the name of God in vain. 3. Remember to sanctify the feast-days,' etc. etc.; the *ten* being made out by dividing the tenth thus: '9. Thou shalt not desire the wife of another. 10. Thou shalt not desire the goods of another.' And this mutilated version of the Commandments, it is implied, contains the very words in which they were written by God, on the two tables.

So much for the fidelity of this pretended 'Church' of Rome, which gives itself out for the guardian and interpreter of Scripture. But now let us see how her practice stands as to her boasted uniformity and consistency with herself. *Ireland* is not quite so far removed as Rome from the influence of the public opinion of men who have their Bibles in their hands. So this always uniform and infallible Church gives in

Ireland *another version* of the Ten Commandments, in which the second is inserted entire.[1]

But is all this worship for nought?—this crowding to the 'stations' at certain days, this kissing and adoring of images: are these acts of devotion simply expressions of faith and love? Or are they done in hope of obtaining some heartfelt petition? Ah, no. All these motives seem to have been insufficient to bring the faithful round the shrines, in due number, or to fill the coffers with the requisite contributions. They have therefore been supplemented by the monstrous fiction of *indulgences*. And now, *what is* an indulgence? The answers one gets to this ques-

[1] See the *Ursuline Manual*, published for the use of the Ursuline Convent, Cork. I cite it, as quoted in *Romanism as it is at Rome*, by the Hon. J. W. Percy, p. 218. But the Irish manuals are not by any means uniform. Four have been sent to me: *Butler's Third Size General Catechism*, *Reilly's Catechism*, and *Butler's First Size Catechism*. In all of these, the Commandments stand as in the Roman *Dottrina Cristiana*; whereas in the fourth, *The General Catechism, etc.*, by the Right Rev. James Doyle, Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, prescribed by him to be taught throughout those dioceses, the first commandment stands thus:—'*I am the Lord thy God: thou shalt not have any strange gods before me: thou shalt not make to thyself either an idol, or any figure to adore it.*' Strange indeed, to find that the one unvarying and infallible Church cannot even make up its mind, what is the first commandment of God! See on this subject, the Catechism of the Council of Trent, Part III. ch. ii. qu. 16.

tion are as curious as they are various. According to the calibre and supposed motive of the inquirer, the explanation is one or another. But as far as I can gather from printed authorities, that put forth for public belief seems to say, that indulgence means liberation, either entire, or for some specified time, from the pains of purgatory. With the fact that the whole tenet of purgatorial pains is an idle fiction, I have at present no concern; but am judging of indulgences *ex concesso*, supposing that such pains really exist. Now, on this hypothesis, I say that it is an inexcusable fault of the Roman Catholic world, and in particular of the inhabitants of Rome, if any one man, woman, or child, ever goes into purgatory, or if any one is now left there, of all that have hitherto died. There is hardly a church in Rome where plenary indulgence is not to be obtained every day for the living and the dead. Over the doors of the churches we read the inscription, 'Indulgentia plenaria quotidiana pro vivis et defunctis:' which Latin words, I submit, will bear no other interpretation. Then, besides this general and wide grant, most generous are the particular concessions of indulgence, both for a man's self and for the souls in purgatory. One's mind is perfectly confounded with

the vastness of the numbers of years which may be gained by any worshipper on solemn occasions; indeed, on every day of his life. By visiting the church of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme on the second Sunday in Advent, may be gained '11,000 years of indulgence, and the remission of all one's sins.' By visiting that of SS. Cosmas and Damian, in the Forum, *any day*, 1000 years, and on the day of the *station*, at the same church, 10,000 years. By kissing the foot of the idol in St. Agostino once in every day, 100 days' indulgence may be gained. So that if a devout Roman chose to pass in his walk, every day, for a year, these two last churches, he might gain at St. Agostino, 36,500, and at SS. Cosmas and Damian, 365,000 years' remission of purgatory: in all, 401,500 years for every year of his life by these two churches only. It is no exaggeration to say, that this number might easily be multiplied tenfold, without entailing any onerous duty. Percy, in the book quoted in a note above, gives an authorized true measure of the Virgin's foot, taken from her real shoe, on which is inscribed that Pope John XXII. conceded 300 years (in a German authorized edition of the same it is 700) of indulgence to whoever should kiss this measure, and recite three Ave-Marias.

This was confirmed by Pope Clement VIII. in 1603, and was extended to any similar measures taken from the original one; adding, that it is also to be applicable to the souls in purgatory. So that any devout German, without stirring from his easy chair, might, supposing three Ave-Marias to occupy five minutes, gain, in one hour of each day of his life, 8400 years of indulgence; or, by this means alone, in each year, upwards of three million years. It is very common to see inscribed over altars, here in Rome, 'Every mass said at this altar liberates one soul from purgatory;' and authoritative declarations clearly contradict the interpretation sometimes evasively given, that the soul so to be liberated is not to be specified.

There is a great institution at Rome, which in fact may be called *the* institution of Rome: greater than the Church, far greater than the trade, or the well-being of the city. It is the Pontifical Lottery—*La Lotteria Pontificia*—the lottery of the Visible Head of the Church: the gambling institution of the Vicar of Christ upon earth. How does it look? Certainly, on paper, not well. But as certainly, in fact and in practice, infinitely worse. And of this awkward effect of such a conjunction, Romanists in society at Rome are well aware. They do not like to hear of the

Lottery they are surprised that we English take notice of anything so low: once or twice I have been surprised to hear even partizans of Pio IX. call it 'an immoral thing.' Yet here it is, beyond comparison, as I remarked, the greatest institution of Rome. The common people live with it ever in their thoughts, their dreams, their prayers. Let us look a little into the working, and the collateral influences, of this ordinance of the Roman Catholic Church; for such, we shall see, it is.

And in order to this, I will ask my reader to accompany me to my usual haunt at such times—the Piazza Madama, behind the General Post Office, at a quarter before noon on any Saturday. It is the weekly drawing of the Pontifical Lottery. What do we see?

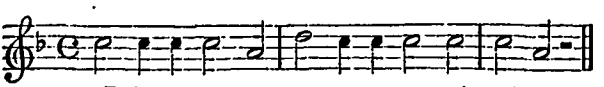
First, the Piazza, or square, is crowded with people, mostly of the lowest class. There are, mingled with them, a few of higher station; some three or four carriages with English spectators; French soldiers, without whom is no place and no thing in Rome; and here and there a thick face, with its arched nose, from the Ghetto, or Hebrew quarter.

Look up, and you see a balcony projecting over the arched gateway of a large imposing building, forming one side of the square. This balcony on

ordinary days bears on its entablature the inscription, *Ministero delle Finanze*, 'Ministry of the Finances.' But to-day it is dressed out in flaunting red, as for a *festa*, and the inscription is covered over. But it may be as well to bear it in mind.

In the middle of this balcony, on the rail, is fixed a glass barrel, with a handle to turn it round. Behind it stand three or four officials, who have been just now ushered in with a blast from two trumpeters, also stationed in the balcony. Immediately behind the glass barrel itself stands a boy of some twelve or thirteen years, dressed in the white uniform of one of the orphan establishments, with a huge white shovel hat. Some time is occupied by the folding, and putting into the barrel, pieces of paper, inscribed with the numbers, from *one* onwards. Each of these is proclaimed, as folded and put in, by one of the officials who acts as spokesman or crier. At last, after eighty-seven, eighty-eight, and eighty-nine have been given out, he raises his voice to a chant, and sings forth, *Numero novanta*, 'number ninety,' this completing the number put in.

And now, or before this, appears on the balcony another character—no less a person than a *Monsignore*, or high dignitary of the Church; one on his

way to the highest preferment—already all but a bishop, and soon possibly to become a cardinal. He appears, not in his ordinary, but in his more solemn official costume; and this connects the ceremonial directly with the spiritual authority of the realm. And now commences the drawing. The barrel having been for some time turned rapidly round to shuffle the numbers, the orphan takes off his hat, makes the sign of the cross, and having waved his open hand in the air to show that it is empty, inserts it into the barrel, and draws out a number, giving it to the Monsignore, who opens it and hands it to the crier. This latter then gives it out, in tone and words as follows:

Prima estratta, numero venti cinque,

i.e., 'The first drawn is number twenty-five.' (The first *what*, we shall see by and by.) Then the trumpets blow their blast and the same is repeated four times more: the proclamation varying each time, *Seconda estratta, Terza, Quarta, Quinta, etc.:* five numbers being thus the whole drawn, out of ninety put in. This done, with various expressions of surprise, delight, or disappointment from the

crowd below, the officials disappear, the square empties itself, and all is as usual till the next Saturday at the same time.

Now, what does all this mean? The reader may already in some measure divine. But it may be well to explain a little further.

In almost every street in Rome is a shop, and in every considerable street are several, devoted to the purchase of lottery-tickets. I shall not pretend to describe to my readers all the complications of single, double, and treble numbers which may be bought; but shall content myself with saying that two numbers purchased with the double chance of these two numbers turning up are called an '*ambo*;' and three purchased with the treble chance of those three turning up, are called a '*terno*:' and that, of course, the higher and more perilous the stake, the richer the prize, if obtained.

Now it is not too much to say, that to get a favourable *terno* in the lottery is the great object in life of thousands in Rome: and all kinds of superstitions and vain fancies are put into play to insure this end. To mention but one. 'The Book of Dreams,' *Libro de' Sogni*, now lies before me: originally published in Florence, but re-published *con*

permesso in Rome. The object of this book is, to catalogue all the possible objects which can be dreamt of: and against each is placed a number, which is to be played in the lottery on the dream occurring. For example: a Roman dreams that he is going into the studio of a sculptor and is bitten by a dog. He consults his *Libro de' Sogni*, and finds, '*Studio* 37,' '*Scultore* 52,' '*Cane mordace* 79.' He goes and buys a *terno* consisting of these three numbers. Sometimes the most important services in case of accident or need of help are postponed to the more important consideration of numbers in the lottery, to be divined from combinations arising out of the circumstances.[1]

The tendency of all this is demoralizing to an extent which cannot be appreciated by those who have not seen it on the spot. The very children in Rome are all gamblers. At every corner they may

[1] I give a few specimens of the numbered catalogue of the Libro de' Sogni, from which the reader may form his own judgment of the reverence for religion which those entertain who sanction it. Agnus Dei (Lamb of God), 86. Altare (altar), 56. Anticristo (Antichrist), 9, 90. Bibbia (Bible), 37, 45. Bestemmia (blasphemy), 84. Confessione (confession), 37. Confessore (confessor), 9. Crocifisso (crucifix), 33. Eternità (eternity), 90. Evangelio (Gospel), 65. Madonna, 60. Sacramento (sacrament), 1. Santificazione (sanctification), 66. Spiriti celeste (spirits celestial), 90; infernale (d'infernal), 14.

be seen practising by games of chance for future higher stakes in the Lottery. And the grown-up children—for the Roman people are mostly children, stunted and kept back in growth by their miserable Government—they, from the priest down to the beggar, are intent upon one thing—a prize in the Lottery. An old woman is noticed praying, in an earnest and agonized manner, before an image of the Virgin in the street. She is regarded by the foreign passers-by as an example of the simple and fearless devotion, which strangers imagine to exist here. But one of the party, better acquainted with the Italian of the common people than the rest, cannot help catching a word or two as he passes: she is thus fervently praying—for a favourable *terno* in the next drawing of the Lottery.

The conduct of the Papal Government, in this matter, is (it is of no use mincing words, where such solemn interests are at stake) simply infamous; worthy of the detestation of Christendom, and of mankind. When the Lottery was first established, its object was, the furnishing a marriage portion for certain young girls at the public expense. They were designated by numbers, and the fortunate ones were those whose numbers were drawn. Hence the use of the

feminine gender in the announcement, 'Prim*a* estratt*a*,' etc. But in course of time, the Popes have confiscated the charitable fund in this, as in many other cases, for their own exchequer, to which now the whole of it is appropriated.

I have endeavoured to ascertain the amount brought in by the Lottery to the Papal exchequer. The following numbers may not be exact, but I have them from authority which I can hardly doubt. I am told that, when the Papal States were existing in their integrity, the profit to the Government from each drawing was 60,000 scudi, *i.e.*, £12,500. At present, it is stated that the profit of each drawing is 30,000 scudi, or £6250.

But here comes in another fact worthy to be recorded. Of old, and up to the beginning of last year, the drawings of the *Roman* Lottery were only held fortnightly. In the alternate weeks the Romans played in the other Italian lotteries by turns. Thus, when I was in Rome in 1861, I used to read announcements over the lottery shops, '*Si giuoca per Firenze*,' 'The play this week is for Florence.' But, since all notice and recognition of Italy have ceased, matters have been altered; the play in the Italian lotteries has been discontinued, and the Pope's lot-

tery is now drawn every week : and I am told that the *weekly* gain to the Government is that which I have mentioned, viz., 30,000 scudi, *i.e.*, on the whole the same as before the Papal dominions were curtailed. I repeat, I do not vouch for these numbers, but have heard them from those who ought to know.

There is one terrible feature in this matter, of the truth of which I am on all hands assured, and which of itself justifies the strong language which I have above applied to the conduct of the ruling priests. It is this. It has been invariably found that, the greater is public distress and poverty, the greater likewise is the yield of the Lottery to the exchequer. Misery makes the people desperate, and they venture more recklessly with the little they possess. And thus this Government of the Vicar of Christ fattens on the wretchedness of its subjects.

But its conduct in another particular is severely commented on. Sacred times, with their strict rules, so ostentatiously paraded on the walls, with texts of Scripture annexed, on the authority of the Cardinal Vicar, are set altogether aside when the Lottery is concerned. At the end of Lent a decree appears respecting the spiritual exercises preparatory to the Easter communion. These are to take place at

certain hours mentioned, and at such times shop-keepers are enjoined, under penalties, to shut their shops. But, will it be believed, the Lottery shops, under direct Government authority, and with the Papal arms over their doors, are at these solemn and prohibited times all open and inviting the public! Yet more. Saturday, March 19, was the Festival of St. Joseph, a day strictly kept here in Rome. Shops are shut, and the people make holiday, one and all. But what to do about the drawing of the Lottery? Shall it be on the Friday? How can that be, seeing that Friday is a day of abstinence and solemnity here, in which all amusement is discouraged?—seeing that I have heard making Friday a day of enjoyment denounced from the pulpit as one of the sins of the sinful age? Yet on the Friday the Lottery *was* drawn.

These few facts may serve to show the correctness of my description, when I said that the Lottery in modern Rome was practically a greater institution than the Church.

Two things at Rome are much vaunted by those who are set to decoy our own countrymen and countrywomen into the Romish Church. These are, the universal gratuitous instruction for children, and the magnificent list of charitable institutions. Let

me offer a remark upon both, which Englishmen will do well to bear in mind.

As to the first, I will say nothing of the very questionable advantage of gratuitous instruction; nor will I at present raise any inquiry as to the *quality* of the instruction. I will dwell simply upon this—that it ought to be borne in mind what this education is as regards *quantity*. In every year, there are in the Roman schools the following holidays. All Sundays, of course. All *Thursdays*. The whole of the Carnival. All Festas, or Feast days. All days connected with the Madonna. All days connected with the Pope. All Apostles' days. Six days at Easter. Five at Christmas. The summer holidays, at the high schools amounting to three months and a half, at the low, or grammar schools, to one month. So that the portion of the year during which the Roman youth are receiving no instruction at all, is very considerable indeed. I may add that in the admirable *Asili d'Infanzia*, or Infant Schools, for which Rome is indebted to the exertions of two English princesses, it is absolutely forbidden to receive female scholars at all!

As to the other point, the magnificent list of charities shown to wondering strangers, let this be borne in mind. A very large proportion of those

which appear on the list have no real existence whatever. Take the trouble to track them to the place indicated, and you will find, either that there is no such thing, or that it has ceased to serve its charitable purpose and has been confiscated to serve the purposes of this or that reigning Pope. I am told that this is true of at least three-fourths of the whole list. A notable example of this is the noble institution of San Michele, on the Ripa Grande, or Port of Rome, for poor and orphans. It is at present reduced to one-third of its original extent, and the rest of the vast building is turned into a political prison.

Speaking of the Roman police, I may be allowed to mention an incident which happened to myself on Friday, January 15th, of the present year. I wanted to return a call in the Largo della Impresa, a small square (as we should phrase it) close to one of the most public places in Rome, the Piazza Colonna. I had asked my way from our landlady, but had taken some wrong turn, and missed it. Meeting two Papal gendarmes on duty as the police of the city, I asked them for the Largo della Impresa, at the same time, to prevent mistake, showing them my friend's card, on which it was very legibly written. They both

pleaded ignorance. One suggested that I wanted the Ripresa de' Barberi, a well-known street leading from the Corso to the Capitol. It was very evident that neither of them could read. It will hardly be credited, that these gendarmes on duty, who pleaded ignorance of the situation of a public place in Rome, were at the moment within a hundred yards of it! What should we think of the efficiency of a policeman on duty in Holborn, who had never heard of Red Lion Square?[1]

I know of cases not admitting of doubt, where the police have been participators in the proceeds of robbery: cases in which name, date, and testimony are all ready, whenever it shall be safe to produce them. Any one who knows what government is here, also knows that the faintest recognisable allusion to the details of any one of these cases would bring down on the head of the unfortunate victim of the plunderers immediate and inevitable vengeance, in the shape of arrest, imprisonment, exile, or whatever

[1] In a very feeble notice of this letter which appeared in the *Dublin Review*, this story was set aside with a remark that 'it was no wonder if the Roman police did not understand the Dean's Italian.' The reader will observe that this is wholly beside the purpose. Besides their clearly understanding it (for they repeated the name after me), they were shown it, legibly written.

else the irresponsible tyranny of priestly power chose to inflict. In consequence, the Romans are compelled to suffer, and be silent.

On two matters a few words must be said: the public teaching of this people, in print, and *vivâ voce*. It may be easily imagined, from all that has been said, what a Roman newspaper must be. I have not, however, been contented with deducing the character of such a publication *à priori*, from existing circumstances. I have now taken in for a month the journal which may be emphatically called 'The Pope's Own,'—the *Osservatore Romano*. As far as my analysis goes, the recipe for producing it is somewhat like this. First, put aside, as not to be used, all subjects of real present interest, foreign and domestic, which can have any possible bearing on the hopes or fears, wishes or grievances, of Roman readers. For example. During the greater part of the time that I have taken the paper, the sovereign of this country has been seriously ill. Not one word of news respecting his health has ever appeared in the journal. During the whole time, street robberies and murders have been of frequent occurrence. Not one of them has been mentioned. The great murder of February 20, received, I believe, a notice of a few

lines. During this time, conflicts between the French and Papal troops have occurred, and complications have arisen out of them, for the knowledge of which we are indebted to foreign journals. Again, not one word in the Pope's newspaper. Every number contains nearly a whole page, on an average, of the bitterest possible abuse of the kingdom of Italy, its sovereign, its parliament, its constituted authorities: and this is not unfrequently accompanied by expressions of the most keen hatred towards England.

Of course, Rome Papal is the object of the most fulsome adulation. Rome, the Rome of which I have been writing, is *quest' angolo benedetto, solo immune dalla tempesta che freme invano a piedi dell' incrollubile scoglio:* 'this blessed corner of the earth, which alone enjoys immunity from the tempest raging in vain at the foot of the rock which it cannot shake.'

The *way in which* this paper defends the Government which it serves, is characteristic and highly instructive. A short time ago, an article on the Courts of Justice in Rome appeared in the Paris paper, the *Journal des Débats.* It spoke the simple truth, and in the following terms. It must be premised that it was dealing with the recent robbery

at the Central Roman Railway Station (which, like other Roman robberies, remains, and *will remain*, undiscovered):—

'When in Rome an offence of this kind is committed, the worst chance that can befall the plundered person is, the arrest of the thief. If the victim is unfortunate enough to prosecute, he is first submitted to a most searching inquiry; then he is summoned before a magistrate, who does not admit him into his presence till after many hours of waiting in an ante-chamber, where he is obliged to be in contact with all kinds of low people. He has to give an exact and minute account of the articles stolen; he must prove by independent testimony that he is the lawful possessor, and submit to the most severe interrogations. After all these annoyances, he is obliged to testify in court things which are not without peril to himself; and at the end of the proceedings, he never sees again the articles which have been taken from him. I am wrong: sometimes he does see them again in the hands of justice: he looks on them, he touches them, he recognises them: he has to make a *procès-verbal* of recognition; but they are never restored to him.'

In the absolute '*never*' of this last sentence there

may be exaggeration; but in the main, the charge is true. As to identification of objects stolen, I know a case in which the prosecutor was asked, 'Can you produce witnesses to prove that you had your watch on when you went out?' As to the restoration of objects stolen, I know a case in which all a man's spoons were stolen, but one. The police came for for the one spoon, to enable them to identify the rest: and it went the way of the rest—the owner never saw it again.

And how does the reader suppose the *Osservatore Romano* replies to the paragraph in the *Journal des Débats?* By quoting the Roman *laws*, which are excellent, but uniformly broken and disregarded by those in authority: and by producing statistics of the number of cases in which articles have been restored, but merely in *numbers*, without giving the names! As a friend remarked to me, the object of the reply was simply to compel the *Débats* to produce names and facts, that revenge might be taken on the persons who have ventured to complain.

As may be imagined, after what has been said, the teaching which the Romans receive from their press is simply beneath contempt. The only value of their papers consists in the telegraphic despatches:

and even these are suppressed, if not palatable to the priestly authorities.

Next, as to the *pulpit* in Rome; and here I may confess that my experience has not been large: but that which I have had, has not tended to produce a high estimate of the instruction which the Romans derive from this source. The politico-papal character seemed to have borne down the spiritual and practical. The judgments which 'this Italy of ours' was suffering at God's hand were eloquently described, and with vehement denunciation against those who have deserved them: the sins of which the preacher spoke were not those against justice and mercy and the weightier matters of the law, but eating meat on Fridays and Saturdays, not communicating at Easter, and the like.

An acquaintance of mine was taken by a French Abbé to hear an eloquent Dominican, in the church of S. Maria sopra Minerva, preach in refutation of Renan's infidel book. He preached most energetically and theatrically: and after a time he paused and cried out, 'And now, my brethren, a cheer for Jesus Christ!' On which he shouted 'Viva Gesù Cristo!' and all the people raised a hearty cheer. This, after a time, he repeated. Then, at the end of

his sermon, he called for three vivas for Gesù Cristo, and when they had been given, cried out '*Più una altra volta!*'—'One cheer more!'—which being enthusiastically given, all was concluded.[1] The French Abbé was disgusted, saying, that such trash would not be listened to for five minutes in France; and added, that it was an illustration of a French saying, 'He raves like the devil in a Dominican.'

I have the following anecdote on authority which I cannot question. On the occasion of the canonization of the Japanese (so-called) martyrs in 1862, Monsignor Dupanloup, Bishop of Orleans, was preaching in the Colosseum before a very large congregation, among whom were many French bishops and clergy. My informant was present, and witnessed the following scene:—The preacher said that the Church had one enemy yet, shrewd, and all-powerful, etc., but that for him *there might be a St. Helena yet in reserve.* On which the priests raised a shout of 'Vive la religion!' A French Captain

[1] The so-called Catholic Congress at Malines, held in this summer of 1864, did not think it beneath them to terminate their proceedings by repeated and enthusiastic cheers of this kind. To what, we may ask, must religion itself have fallen, when even reverence and decency have departed from its appointed guardians?

near my informant could not stand this, and in his turn raised his cap and shouted 'Vive l'Empereur!' in which he was joined by the French soldiers present.

Monsignor Francesco Liverani is now a voluntary exile at Turin. He has been successively Canon of Santa Maria Maggiore and of Santa Maria in Via Lata at Rome. Into both these chapters he attempted in vain to introduce church discipline and moral reform. In the former the behaviour of the officiating clergy during divine service was most scandalous. I quote the following description, which, I beg to add, *I verified with my own eyes* in 1861:—

'Santa Maria Maggiore is one of the three patriarchal basilicas, and possesses a body of clergy of about eighty-three *cappellani*, *beneficiati*, and *canons*, and these last are for the most part *prelates*. It contains memories and monuments solemn and august, and possessing a sweet charm for any one who has a Catholic heart in his breast. . . . If any one has a desire to know and to have proof of this body of clergy, let him stay a little while in the basilica, a patient spectator of the divine offices. At the sound of the bell he shall see eight or ten persons, vested in various manners, most of them with a habit of grey fur, and the rest of ermine,

issue forth from a chamber, which, by its vestiges of ancient magnificence, he will conclude is the sacristy; but certainly not by the deportment of these persons, who, as they proceed, are conversing with action and tone both rude and sonorous. They are treating, perhaps, some questions of the more abstruse and recondite theology, unnoticed by St. Anselm of Aosta and St. Thomas of Aquinum? Alas, no; what these men are talking of is, *The Book of Dreams*, the drawings of the Lottery, and the ventures that have failed, concerning which they have already made engagements in vain, engagements with which their breviary and service books have no concern. If in the evening they meet at the chanting of the psalms at vespers, there will not be wanting some who have but just now left the temple of Bacchus, and carry impressed on their inflamed countenance the favours and the jokes of that comfortable and witty divinity. When assembled in the choir, the appointed place for the alternate singing of the sacred canticles, they do not even then settle themselves to a more modest and silent behaviour; their chattering is not stopped either by the presence of God among them, nor does shame at the presence of men reduce them to a more reverent

and chastened comportment. There is a restless wandering from one place to another: a whispering in one another's ears: a sending messages from one stall to another; laughing, chattering, passing about remarks and jokes, laughing between one verse and another, and indeed throughout the whole time of the service: passing from the choir to the sacristy in order to be able to converse louder.... For whole months, alone among the canons, I have attended service in the choir: always with but a few present: sometimes the whole psalmody depended upon my poor voice, and that of a stammering old licentiate who answered with the other part of the chant. Nor did the ministration at the altar itself prevent the deacon, sub-deacon, and celebrant, from continuing the unworthy trifling described above as practised in the psalmody. During evening prayer in Lent, 1860, three priests were caught by me in the act of passing from one side of the choir to the other signs of such a disgraceful nature that I dare not describe them by their proper name.'

In a further part of the same chapter, he proceeds: 'We will end with another narrative. In the crypt of Santa Maria in Via Lata is a chapel dedicated to the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, because tradition

reports that the great teacher of the Gentiles lodged there "when he remained two whole years in his own hired house, and received all who came in to him" (Acts xxviii. 30). A confraternity is established there in charge of the oratory, and during the octave of the feast of the two great Apostles, the faithful come in crowds to visit it, and to offer alms. I was governor of the fraternity in 1853; and it was reported to me by the vice-curate of the basilica, Don Luigi Antonini, that the brothers, at the end of the sacred ceremonies and the closing of the chapel, regaled themselves there till a late hour at a supper and a merrymaking, women also being present, though not of bad character. Being certain of the truth of this report, I suspended, according to statute, the guilty brethren, and made other arrangements calculated to restore the institution to the ancient discipline and observance. The fact was too grave for any one who did not wish to turn the Catholic worship into hypocrisy and superstition, and to convert it into a fraudulent means of getting money from the faithful, in order to have the means of jollification and drunkenness. And yet the secret chapter of Santa Maria in Via Lata, the congregation of the Visita, and Cardinal Patrizi, with all his authority, as President and as Vicar of His

Holiness, pronounced me to be in the wrong, and the brethren in the right. . . . It was solemnly announced to me by letter that the cardinal would reserve the cause for his own decision, and whenever I should legally insist upon it, would pronounce against me; and the reason given to me verbally by Monsignor Fausti, the Secretary of the Visita, was as follows :— that when the Roman people discovered that the brethren squandered their charitable offerings in eating and drinking, it would prevent them from contributing in future. As if it were a good thing to take money from the faithful for such a purpose! All the impertinences of the cardinal had no more attention from me than every one now-a-days pays to them : I continued in my purpose of reforming the confraternity, and left it in a better condition ; so much so, that even the guilty persons who were admonished by me, thanked me for it. And I discovered in the Canon Tarnassi a man of rare and earnest goodness ; for in my cell he bitterly wept the utterly degraded condition of the office of the Vicariate, through the incapacity of Cardinal Patrizi.'

It is unnecessary for me to add a word of comment on the facts here adduced. I will only fortify them by stating that in Monsignor Liverani's

book,[1] all the documents are given in an Appendix, and that they fully bear out his narrative. On its publication, some of his facts were denied by the persons implicated, and were substantiated by him, to their entire confusion and shame.

Many more things might yet be described. But the present letter has run to sufficient length, and enough has been adduced to put the English reader in possession of some idea of the state of matters here. I have written, not because I wanted to make out a case, not because I had any political interests to serve, not because I disliked this or that person or party; but simply because that plain sense of common truth and justice in which we in England are brought up, seemed to require it of me: because I could not write of the delights of this wonderful city, without at the same time in fairness expressing my sense of its present utter degradation: because I wished, if it

[1] 'Il Papato, l'Impero, ed il Regno d' Italia: Memoria di Monsignor Francesco Liverani, Prelato Domestico e Protonotario della Santa Sede al Conte De Montalembert. Firenze, G. Barbera, Editore. 1861.' The *Dublin Review*, in the article mentioned above (note, p. 119), asserts that these statements of Mgr. Liverani have been long ago refuted. If my information is correct, so far is this from being the case, that the attempt to deny them, mentioned in the text, resulted in consequences most disastrous to one of the parties implicated.

might be so, to open the eyes of some of my countrymen and countrywomen who are in danger of believing the falsehoods which are here told them, and of being led astray by the fair surface here presented, and the smooth talk of the practised decoyers with which Roman society abounds.

To an observant eye, everything here indicates that the present state of Rome cannot last much longer. Causes are at work, stronger and deeper than the duration of French occupation, or the lifetime of the present Pope, which must before long undermine the tottering fabric of modern Romanism. The life and spirit of its votaries are fast departing. Year by year, the old ceremonies are less attended, and less cared for by those who attend them. Whether it be Carnival or Christmas, or Easter, the remark of the Romans universally is, that it is nothing to what it used to be a few years since. But yesterday, I witnessed the processions of the Confraternities coming to adore the Easter sepulchre in St. Peter's. There was lamentation round me that where we saw ten or twenty members, there used to be hundreds. And the aspect of that vast building during the most solemn services, I can never forget. It was thronged by thousands, come to hear the *Miserere* and see the

ceremonies. But general reverence there was none. And I speak not now of the behaviour of *strangers*. While one *Roman* was kneeling, twenty were walking and talking aloud, even during the *Miserere* itself. The remark was made to me by one of themselves, 'Can this possibly be a Church?'

Inquire where one will, and of whom one will, the same account is always given by men in whom there is any truth at all. And the account is, that all is as bad as possible—no public faith, no desire for the good of the people; government servants miserably paid, and abandoned after long service; while peculation and corruption are unblushingly practised in the highest places: public works undertaken for the fraudulent benefit of one or two favoured persons, and to the ruin of the meritorious undertakers of them: all real improvement virtually prohibited: miserable pittances of reform, when resistance would be dangerous, granted 'to the ear, but broken to the hope;' and beneath a fair semblance of religion and purity, a reeking mass of falsehood, oppression, impurity, and selfishness, the details of which must be incredible except to those who, like myself, have had the means of substantiating them. It is not too much to say that the present moral and religious

state of Rome is a foul blot on modern Christendom, and hardly to be paralleled even among the darkest passages in the history of our race.

If it be inquired what is the remedy for the terrible evil, I can only reply that I am not writing a political essay, but simply narrating what I have seen and heard. Still, one expression of my sincere conviction as to the answer of the question may perhaps be allowed, and it is this: that when the time comes for change, no partial reform, no substitution of one party or one man for another, within the Papal Court, will be sufficient to effect any real good, as long as the *system* survives. No man, and no body of men, be they ever so pure in intention and upright in purpose, can cope with the monstrous evils consequent upon the temporal priestly power: but must eventually be borne away; either sinking under the current, or swimming with it. Nothing will ever reform Rome, short of the entire extinction of the temporal power of the priesthood. Better any secular misgovernment, than the present hideous blasphemy against God and man: better any measure of earthly injustice, than this assertion of celestial right, and perpetration of infernal wrong.

V.

THE SOUTH.

IF any one loves contrast, let him shut his eyes and ears at Rome, and open them at Naples. Midnight and noon, winter and summer, decrepitude and frolicsomeness, death and life, are not more opposite.

I had heard of the mob which awaits travellers by the express from Rome on their arrival at the Naples station. I therefore halted my party by the express at ancient Capua, slept there, saw the magnificent amphitheatre, and slunk into Naples at mid-day by a local train, unlooked-for of porters and cabmen.

Another advantage was thus gained. Instead of arriving in the evening, and seeing nothing but the frantic crowd through which the new-comer has to fight his way, we emerged upon the great city in the

full blaze of noon, and in the midst of its thousand employments. What an outburst of life it is! All trades going on in the open street: tinkering caldrons, hammering on anvils, sawing, filing, cooking, and the rest: voices, shrill as a parrot's scream, lifted to their height, a hundred together, look which way you will: every pavement crowded with passers and loungers: carriages, of all sizes and patterns, dashing about at full speed, their whips cracking, and their brass-bedizened harness flashing in the sun: dust, white and choking, forming a hot misty veil for the sun to beat down and the waves to sparkle through: bare-legged savages running in rows through the water with baskets on their heads to the boats which they are unlading: smells, as if the sea itself were poisoned into the cesspool of the universe: such are the accompaniments through which we drive along the thickly-peopled shore of the glorious bay in quest of our destined inn.

Nor was the impression thus made likely to be removed, when, after luncheon, we strolled out into the great thoroughfares of the city. The main street, the Toledo, is nearly a mile and a half long, and fairly wide, as Italian streets go, with a good foot-pavement on either side. At all hours of the day, it

is a dark mass of human beings from one end to the other: on the pavements, and among the carriages. Locomotion, except at a very slow rate, is impossible. Look up the side streets to the west, or down those to the east, and it is the same: all is eagerness, all is bustle, all is life, all is noise. Never was an ensign better chosen than that of Naples—a horse at full speed.

How to reduce such a people, after centuries of misgovernment, to order and contentment, is a problem which any one who sees them may be thankful is intrusted to other hands than his own. He may be thankful also, however, to be able to trace many symptoms of progressive improvement and, whoever he be, will at least, if he have any human feeling in his breast, breathe a prayer that those who now bear sway here may have wisdom to comprehend their high duties and best interests, and firmness to follow them unflinchingly.

The greatest of all obstacles to the present and future welfare of Southern Italy is the horrid system of brigandage, organized at Rome by the ex-King of Naples, and sanctioned by the present unprincipled Papal Government. All that is vicious and disaffected in Naples finds shelter and encouragement

at Rome; and bands of wretches, of whom the brothers La Gala may serve for a sample, are sent forth from the 'Holy See' (from whose territory, be it remembered, none can go out without a passport from the authorities) to rob and murder in the border provinces, to keep alive irritation and discontent, and cause trouble and expense to the Italian Government. It may well move indignation when we reflect, that the pontiff, under whose sanction these things are done, should have had the effrontery within the last few weeks to address an allocution to the Czar on the subject of the persecution of Roman Catholics in Poland, and to speak, with a profane assumption of solemnity, of his account before the Great Judge.

After all, to pass from the second and third-rate actors in the great drama to a higher order, there is one with whom it rests whether these sanctioned atrocities shall any longer continue, or not. If he, who, having half liberated Italy, timidly held his hand, were to choose to speak but one decisive word, the brigand crusade of Francesco and the priests would come to an end to-morrow. But he is apparently entangled in the meshes of inconsistent and opposite policies, and makes no sign. He it is who is the undoubted author of the present difficulties

and troubles of Italy, and at whose door the guilt of them lies.[1]

But let us go on to other and more congenial topics. It may seem as if enough had been said and written about Pompeii. Still, I cannot but record my own impressions of that strange place. The feeling, in treading its deserted streets, was wholly unlike any other I remember. It is, and it is not, a ruin. It fell asleep, and ages passed, and it has awakened in a new world. From the summit of Vesuvius, the eye surveys the broad lands round its base, glittering with the sunny towns of this our century, and among them discerns one city, dark in sombre brown, like a Capuchin in the midst of a gala. This is Pompeii—the irrevocable Past standing with its solemn testimony in the presence of the day that flits by with its trifles and its cares.

The small things which bring home this testimony to us have been often enumerated. All have heard of the dough kneaded for the oven, the linen wrung out for drying, the meat in the act of cooking, the loaves, and fruits, and eggs, and instruments of the kitchen and the toilet. But the most affecting of

[1] On his recent Convention, see the note at the end of the volume.

all is perhaps not so generally known. On the discovery, in removing the ashes, of a substance approaching in shape to human remains, a happy thought occurred, that by making an aperture, and pouring in wet plaster, the form, which had doubtless wasted away and left a hollow within, might be reproduced. The experiment was eminently successful: and the result as yet has been, the production of four human figures, in attitudes most characteristic, and most affecting. One group consists of two females; it would seem, mother and daughter. The young girl lies writhing in the very agony in which she passed away. One hand convulsively presses a handkerchief on her head: one foot is lifted up in her pain. It can be plainly seen that she was covered with a thin night-robe only: the flesh of the shoulder is comparatively smooth, and beneath it the very texture of the dress can be traced.

Time may bring to light many similar records of human suffering, for not more than one-third of the buried city has been as yet disinterred. It perhaps could hardly be expected that, at a time when the preaching of St. Paul was yet fresh in Rome itself, any trace of the new and purer faith should be found

in a city nearly two hundred miles from the capital. And it would seem that as yet none has appeared. But, on the other hand, it is very possible that some chance hint may be brought to light, of its presence, even thus early, at Pompeii; some writing, among the many found on the walls, which may indicate hopes and aspirations springing from another source than man himself; some reference, as in the case of the remarkable inscription mentioned in my third letter, to that great mystery which is the shame, and at the same time the glory, of Christians. For this, and for all other reasons, the further progress of the excavations will be regarded with lively interest. They are continually going on, and visitors have daily the chance of seeing new objects brought to light.

The ascent of Vesuvius has been so often and so well described, that it is not my intention to give any detailed narrative of our own. It may suffice to mention one or two salient points which remain as impressions in my memory, and which were unlooked for at the time.

A matter of very great interest (in the present inert state of the volcano, *the* great matter of interest) is, the crossing over the vast field of lava

which resulted from the eruption of 1858. On that occasion, the carriage road up to the Hermitage was destroyed, and a vast tract of the mountain side was covered. Wherever the western side of Vesuvius can be clearly seen, this lava-field is perceptible as a large black patch on its surface, almost undistinguishable from shadow, yet existing, and most conspicuous, in the full glare of the sun, where no shadow can have place. When the traveller approaches it, no sight can be imagined more strange and unlooked-for. One is prepared to find a lava-field looking something like a glacier: a surface which has consolidated when in a flowing state, and become split in all directions with chinks after consolidation. But no one, certainly none of us, was prepared for what we found. First of all, imagine the colour: it is as near as possible the mixture, well known to water-colour painters, of madder-brown and cobalt, the former predominating: much diversified, however, with portions of both darker and lighter tint; sometimes passing through the lighter and warmer browns even to a bright primrose yellow, owing to the presence of sulphur. All this perhaps might have been expected: it is what follows, that seemed so passing strange. The surface of this rich

mass of colour, what would my reader expect it to be? Certainly, anything but what it is. The lava has flowed onward slowly, being evidently of a thick, treacly consistence. The result of this has been, the formation of all kinds of queer and unthought-of shapes, as the sluggish liquid has fallen over, or rotated, or reduplicated itself. The following recipe will perhaps give the best description. Take a jar of very thick treacle, a spoon, and a plate. Fill the spoon, and, holding it over the plate, pour the treacle slowly, making, as you pour, the most complicated devices possible. Let the favourite one be that produced by the stream running round and round a centre, forming when solid the appearance of a strand of rope. But with this let all others be mixed. Carry your hand backwards and forwards, with all manner of shakings and eccentricities as it moves, producing knots and entanglements of infinite variety. And even then you will not have represented these curly, creaming waves, these gnarled roots of gigantic trees, these fantastic domes, broken in at the centre, these rippling pools suddenly fixed, these broken cliffs of many hues, and strata wildly contorted. It is in truth the veriest fever-dream of bizarre shape, material, and colour. And add to what has been already said,

that the whole surface is as it were frizzled into roughness, and presenting the sharp prickles of a rasp or a nutmeg-grater. It was amusing to watch the ample dresses of a party of ladies in front of us, catching and tearing, as they enveloped and dragged over the the round masses of lava, and were caught by their myriad minute retinacula.

As regards the ascent of the cone, it is, and it is not, difficult. It *is:* for when you leave the horses at the bottom of it, you have before you a straight upward path (from which, for reasons which follow, you cannot possibly deviate) 900 feet in height, and at an angle of considerably more than 45°. Such a climb cannot be easy, wherever it is found. And, it *is not* difficult: for the guides have constructed this path of large solid blocks of lava, so that you have simply to mount from one to another as on a rough staircase; and the ascent is merely a matter of patience and endurance, not of difficulty of any kind. You cannot deviate from this track, for on either side of you are loose ashes into which you would sink up to your knees, and ascent become impossible. The climb took our party, with many rests by the way, just an hour.

As far as a mountain view is concerned, that from

Vesuvius is truly magnificent, as might well be supposed. But in all matters relating to the volcanic character of the mountain itself, we could not have visited it at a worse time. It has shown no activity now for many months. Smoke is very rarely seen issuing from its crater. When we looked down it, snow lay at the bottom. All that the traveller witnesses in proof of the present existence of volcanic action is, a sulphureous steam issuing from a few chinks near the top, a sharp suffocating sensation when he passes round to leeward of the crater, and a sound as of boiling water on applying the ear to the ground where it is cracked into fissures. There is a spot, far down on the lava-field of 1858, where dry sticks, on being thrown in, catch fire; and the rise of temperature, as one passes over this strange track, is clearly perceptible. The guides informed us, that signs of an approaching eruption were already beginning, in the drying up of the wells round the foot of the mountain. But we were told that they are in the habit of saying this, in order to keep strangers at Naples: and, moreover, that a scientific society, which has been formed for the express purpose of watching the phenomena of Vesuvius, report that no such signs have yet occurred.

The *descent* from the summit to the *Atrio di Cavallo*, where the donkeys wait at the foot of the cone, is accomplished with perfect ease in little more than ten minutes. There is something even luxurious in the process. You sit down, inserting your feet in the loose ashes and paddling onwards. Your downward progress is sufficiently rapid to be pleasant, and sufficiently retarded to be safe. I remember nothing like it, except shooting down the polished slides of wood in the great salt-mine in Hallein, where the candle in one's hand kept blowing out and in again with the rush through the air. That descent was certainly more exciting, but not so safe nor luxurious.

Beautiful, beautiful Sorrento — there surely was never a lovelier spot in the wide world. First, take a background of wild mountains, soaring, with many-shaped peaks, into the southern and eastern sky, clad, as the day wears on, with all the varying hues of purple and blue, till the evening sun pours on them its flood of fire : in front of them let there be banks of long stretching inland cliffs, striped, and capped, with dark patches of olive and pine—these also passing, in the course of the day, almost through the tints of the prism, and chastened to the eye

through pearly veils of haze. Then at their foot, but still high in air, let there be poured out from Nature's 'avish horn all the verdure that earth knows, and fruit-tree yielding fruit after its kind: the stately orange, ever laden with its golden globes, ever breathing out its fairy perfume on the air: the vine, not here a trailer on the ground, nor trained to staves breast high, but wandering in exuberance from tree to tree, framing with its bright green leaves the glimpses of the dazzling sky: add to these the fig, the citron, the pomegranate, with all the fruits of commoner and humbler name. In the midst of this garden of plenty, poured out lavishly, as it is poured, gleam the sunny villages and farms, down through the orchards, even to where they crown with a line of brightness the long ranges of cliff, and look sheer on the blue mirror of the tideless bay. Look from them, or look at them, and the eye knows not where to rest, nor when to turn away. If landward, or half landward, across the curve of the gulf, there is the scene which I have described, beheld, as far as I know, nowhere else: glorious in all its aspects, but when the sun slants from the west, fitter to be in heaven than here on earth: if seaward, there is the blue expanse of the famous bay—one may trace east-

ward the snowy peaks of the mountains of Campania, broken by the dense purple mass of Vesuvius, rising with long and gradual slope up to his rounded cone, and falling again as gently towards Naples. At his foot, and stretching away along the shore for many a mile round the course of the bay, glitter the belt of towns which form the suburbs of the busy city. There she lies, gleaming through the haze, far fairer thus than near: and as the eye passes on westward, what names may it note in the progress—Puteoli, where landed the Apostle of the Gentiles: Baiæ with its unrivalled bay—Misenum and Cumæ, and Procida.[1]

It is true, that all this lovely prospect is not enjoyed without its drawbacks. Throughout Southern Italy, one is ever reminded of the title of a childhood's fable, 'Beauty and the Beast.' The lower orders of the population at Sorrento, at all events, take care that it shall not be forgotten. They annoy the stranger everywhere and at all times, surrounding

[1] Mrs. Stowe, in her *Agnes of Sorrento*, repeatedly represents *Capri* as seen from that place, and indeed elaborately describes its appearance; but her memory must have misled her. From no part of Sorrento can that island by any possibility be seen, nor indeed until the extreme cape of Sorrento is passed. Not even Ischia, which is far north-east of Capri, nor even all Procida, is visible from the beach.

him with cries for alms, and abusing him if they meet with a refusal. The beautiful glens with which the landward side of the town is surrounded are absolutely unapproachable from the filth accumulated in them. We met with but one place in all our travels worse in these respects than Sorrento, and that shall be presently described.

AMALFI was a name which had always carried a sound of romance with it: suggesting rocky glens, spanned by ruins of strange form and colour, and floated over by bright southern mists. My acquaintance with it was due to the walls of our water-colour exhibitions. Many a lovely spot lives and glows in the English fancy, solely through the works of our water-colour painters: and our national obligations to such men as Robotham, and T. M. Richardson, and Vacher, are surely great. Sick-beds, and weary solitudes, are cheered and peopled by gleams of nature and fragments of the stir of life; and the sunshine of our national pencil half compensates for the gloom of our sky. To Amalfi then our steps were bound, to confirm, or to dissipate the romance of the galleries in Pall-Mall.

The Amalfi journey proper begins at the railway station of Vietri, above Salerno. We had slept the

previous night at La Cava, and drove from thence in a carriage without taking the train. At the top of the hill near the Vietri station, the really southern sea first broke upon our eyes: the wide bay of Salerno, with a long stretch of coast to the left, fading into lighter and lighter blue, and ending in Point Licosa, where doubtless he who stands looks over into Sicily, and traces the majestic cone of Ætna. The way from Vietri descends down zig-zags to the right, and, approaching the sea, enters on that celebrated coast road by which only Amalfi can be approached with wheels.

Not in variety of interest, but in grandeur, in picturesque grouping and outline, and above all in loveliness of colouring, this Amalfi Riviera far surpasses any part of that from Nice to Genoa. There, we have the South still struggling with the North, though prevailing: here, she has all to herself, and pours out her balmy breath, and her rainbow tints, with undisputed munificence. Nothing in picture or in imagination can surpass the colour of the sea: it is not blue, it is not purple, it is not green, but it is all of these by turns, nay, all of these together, flashing into and flashing through one another, and passing in the distance into an indescribable blended

hue of all three, the reflexion of the amethyst in the surface of the turquoise. The whole coast is a series of deeply indented bays and coves, separated by bold and varied rocky promontories, each crowned with its ruined mediæval fort, quaintly machicolated. In the little bays are various towns and villages: Cetaro, Majori, Minori, Atrani, curiously piled up, each against its rocky glen, with quaint arcades and towers, and bright coloured walls and houses,—each with its tiny strip of white beach, and boats, and swarm of children in scant clothing or in none, splashing in the bright water. And thus, through a series of such scenes of marvellous beauty, is Amalfi approached.

At first sight, it seems to be but a repetition, on a larger scale, of the villages already described. Let me try to give the reader some idea of life there. The *Capuccini* hotel (so called because it was for some years held in the large convent of the Capuchins, now restored to its former occupants) is situated in the middle of the beach, and has a wide terrace or balcony in front, from which the whole shore is commanded. Immediately before it is a broad paved space, on which daily the wheat is spread to dry which is used in the manufacture of

maccaroni—the staple of the place. Early in the morning it is brought down in sacks, and washed in the stream which, descending from the glen, here falls into the sea. This done, it is spread on the pavement in the eye of the sun, and during the whole day is turned over by bare-legged women, who, with flat wooden spades which they push before them, first directly, and then transversely, keep arranging it in rows like the hay in a meadow. The drying takes the whole heat of the day: and, as the evening approaches, it is replaced in the sacks, and taken to the mills to be ground. The paved floor is continually guarded day and night by a sentinel, who tilts with his bayonet at pigs and other intruders. On either side of this floor stretches away the beach, many-boated, populous, dirty, vociferous. The noise evermore sounding from it is something perfectly marvellous. The whole population seems to live there, and to be always endeavouring to notify the fact to some one far out at sea, by shouting at the top of its voice. Descend into the fray, and you are a lost man. In an instant, a dozen ragamuffins converge upon you, begging (that is not the word), demanding, in the most imperious tones, some thing, or some drink, from you. They pull your coat, they

proceed from familiarity to insolence, and even to the grossest insults. Nothing but a stout stick swung round in a circle has the slightest chance of keeping them at bay. One of them threw a stone and struck me on the head: two friends of ours were sketching under the rocks, when a great stone, pushed down from above by these scamps, fell within a few feet of them. To these add not a few specimens of the *povero cieco* (poor blind man), and the *povero vecchio* (poor old man), so abundant in South Italy, following you, incessant, inseparable, whining, or remonstrating, or even scolding you for not giving, and the delights of a walk on the Amalfi beach may be conceived.

Perhaps you change your course, and determine to explore the beautiful glen, or valley of the *molini* (mills), passing the curious Saracenic cathedral and the quaintly-arched narrow streets. Even this is not done without much persecution of the same sort: but in this direction it is possible eventually to distance the pursuers. And most interesting this glen is: abounding with subjects for exploration and for the sketch-book. It is full of mills, each going with its deafening clack, and its great splash of water,—each variously contrived so as to borrow the descending

motive power, and to pass it on—and thus presenting a series of arches, and aqueducts, and bridges, and stone stairs, and piled-up roofs, such as I should think can nowhere else be found. Add to all this diversity of form, the colours of stone, and wet wood, and brick, and clinging vegetation: the stains, dark or gorgeous, of water, and weather, and chemical matter employed in the mills: insert here and there a cottage-door with a family group,—the old man on his staff, the old woman spinning, the half-naked children, the curious mummy-like chrysalis of an infant in its swathing clothes; break the series now and then with a pergola, or trellised canopy of lemon trees, bright green in the leaf, violet purple in the young shoot, hanging their pale gold fruit almost thicker than the leaves,—and then let all the scene be dappled with the dark cool shadows of the south, cut clear into the white mass of sunshine,—let it all be towered over by fantastic rocks of every shape and tint, leaving only a broad stripe above for the blue heaven to look down through;—and you have but the vain struggle of words with the unparalleled strangeness and overpowering beauty of the glen of the *molini* at Amalfi.

I had heard of *an Amalfi fern*, to be found some-

where in this glen. I more than suspected what it would turn out, having been taught by previous experience at Nice. Nothing is more delightful than exploration with an object in view, especially when that object is such as to bring one into acquaintance with the minute details of natural beauty. So that there was no lack of ardour in the explorer, nor of assiduity in the search. It led me up far above the noisy mills, past many a projecting rock over which the yet unsullied stream made cascades among the ruins of deserted buildings: prompted many a deviation from the track to pry into the chinks of rocks and walls: till at last, among the tufts of some luxuriant verdure of myrtle and arbutus, I descried the glazed and palmated fronds of my old Nice acquaintance, the *Pteris Cretica.* Ample was its growth, abundant its quantity: so, under these conditions (which ought always to be fulfilled, before a naturalist robs any *habitat* of its native plants), I secured a rich plunder, which I hope one day to see flourishing, by the side of its fellow from Nice, in the greenhouse at the Deanery.

One Amalfi expedition must not be forgotten, because it brought to our notice characteristics of country and of architecture new and strange. High

above, in the mountain fastnesses over Amalfi and Atrani, is perched the ancient Saracenic town of Ravello. It is accessible only on foot or horseback, by narrow paths between walls or passing over ledges of rock. How the fierce sun glared down on them that April morning, as our cavalcade wound upward, among the glancing lizards and the bursting pine-shoots, and the strange cries, and stories, and songs, of our native guides! How refreshing it was, at a turn of the zig-zags, to catch the fresh sea-breeze, and with it a glimpse of the far-off belt of blue rising over the roofs and many-coloured cupola of Amalfi! In such a horseback climb, where the single file makes solitude almost a necessity, various thoughts flitted across one's mind: how such paths as these must have led from one to another of the rock-built cities of Galilee, where One of Blessed Name went about healing and teaching: how it may have been in some such steep winding access as I see before me with Ravello at its top, that the mourners and the Comforter met that evening outside the gate of Nain.

But reveries are cut short, as we enter under the narrow gate of the town, and proceed to examine, one after another, the quaintest old churches and

houses—full of Moorish pillars and arcades, resting on strange beasts, and diversified with gorgeous mosaic patterns.

Our lunch was taken on a terrace commanding a glorious view over sea, and coast, and inland gorges —which terrace however I do not mention for that reason, but because it was in the garden of the Palazzo Rufolo, which has become the property of an English gentleman, and is now the centre of blessing and civilisation for Ravello and its neighbourhood. Here, we have no beggary: and we heard much of the love and esteem in which Mr. Reid is held by the inhabitants,—of his institution of schools, and other exertions for their benefit. A deplorable outrage, at a time when this peninsula was infested by the Pope's 'defenders of justice and the Church,' drove Mr. Reid and his family away; but we were glad to hear that the inhabitants had earnestly petitioned for their return, and that it is likely soon to take place.

After surveying the Moorish wonders of Ravello, we returned by similar mountain paths, and glens ringing with nightingales, to our comfortable quarters at the Capuccini.

CAPRI—full of memories of one of the darkest

passages in history, and of one of its basest characters. Here were spent the last years of the life of Tiberius: here he buried himself in those fearful immoralities which have made his name infamous to all ages; and hence he carried on his persecutions against the senatorial families in the capital. Hence he despatched that letter to the Senate, whose exordium, so full of a tyrant's despair, has been sublimely commented on by Tacitus: 'What I shall write to you, Conscript Fathers, or how I shall write, or what in short I shall abstain from writing at this time, may the gods and goddesses destroy me worse than I daily feel myself perishing, if I know.' 'To such an extent,' adds the historian, 'had his crimes and his enormities become punishments even to himself. Nor was it in vain that the wisest of men used to say, that if the spirits of tyrants could be laid open, we should see them all lacerated and scarred: for as men's bodies are mangled with blows, so is the mind torn by cruelty, by lust, by evil designs. Neither exalted fortune, nor his island solitudes, could protect Tiberius from the necessity of confessing the torments of his breast, and becoming himself the recorder of his own punishment.'

It was no wonder that, with such historic interest

attaching to Capri, we should have determined not to leave the South without visiting it.

In the slowest of steamers and on the bluest of seas, we accomplished the fourteen miles from the mole of Santa Lucia at Naples in three hours and a half, and lay-to opposite the famous blue grotto. Boat-load after boat-load, our passengers went and returned: and the opinion was general that the colour of the water was more wonderful, and that of the rocky roof less wonderful, than had been expected. In the former particular, this cavern is unrivalled. The water is of a very light flashing blue, passing at the slightest agitation first into silvery white, then into all the colours of the rainbow. A splash with the oar or with the hand produces first a burst of silver light, then, as the drops fall on the surface, a shower of many coloured pearls. A boy is always ready, for a trifle, to throw off his few clothes and plunge in: and then the sight is strange in the extreme. The head and hands, as he swims, retain their natural colour; while the rest of the body seems electro-plated with frosted silver. Anything more elf-like and uncanny cannot well be conceived.

I must confess that, on the whole, I do not think

the far-famed Grotta Azzurra equal to the cave known as Dolor Hugo, at the Lizard. This, like the other, is a sea-grotto, entered in a boat. The colour of the water is a much darker blue, varied with stripes of emerald green. But that in which the Dolor Hugo excels is, the colour of the rock forming its sides and roof. This, being composed of serpentine, is dark green, veined with scarlet: and the effect of the mixture of the colours is, to throw over the whole cave a wonderful and rich hue of pink madder, which blends charmingly with the deep blue and green of the water. I may mention, in passing, that our Cornish sea has really very little to fear in comparison with the Mediterranean at Amalfi and Capri. There is more here of native inherent blue in the water, more on the Cornish coast of the vivid inimitable green with deep blue shadows. But each is so beautiful of itself, that it is a sin against taste to compare them.

However, let us return to Capri. Not a wheel exists in the island: so that our baggage must mount up from the shore, to the village far over us, on the heads of these barefooted, good-natured women, who throng the beach, eager for the job.

How we spent three days at the Hotel Pagano,

well tended and cared-for: how we went on the first day to Tiberius's castle, and saw the place where the monster cast his victims over the cliff into the sea, with boatmen ready below to prevent the escape of any wretch who might have life yet in him;—how we climbed the 535 steps cut in the vast cliff which separates Capri from Anacapri; how we intended to row round the island and explore all the numerous caves, but did not, the waves having put their veto on our project; let all this remain thus briefly hinted. But the island itself deserves more extended notice. Its grandeur and luxuriance are wonderful. To mention but one combination of these two: immediately under the huge cliffs which, as has been said, separate the higher from the lower part of the island, and on a slope which from its steepness would anywhere else be occupied by *débris* without vegetation, is a magnificent wood of myrtle, arbutus, lentisk, and an undergrowth of the most beautiful flowers. Every kind of fruit grows in profusion. Now, April 30, the figs are purpling off into ripeness, and the vines are crowded with the promise of a fruitful vintage.

The inhabitants of Capri contrast favourably with those of Sorrento and Amalfi. Physically, they seem to belong to a finer race: there is at the same time

more personal beauty and more independence. Begging is comparatively rare.

Truly, Tiberius was right when he chose Capri for a solitude. 'No one can land,' says Tacitus, 'without the knowledge of the guard.' There are, in fact, but two landing-places; the *Grande* and the *Piccola Marina*, on opposite sides of the island. The French, in 1808, effected a landing on the rocks at the south-western point, and there is now a tiny cove with a zig-zag path down to it, immediately under 'Tiberius's Castle. But an island of its size (ten miles in circumference) more secluded from the world can hardly be found.

Several English gentlemen are settled at Capri, one of whom, I was glad to hear, is doing much for the population in the way of establishing and maintaining schools. Here, as at Ravello, such efforts are met with lively gratitude; and any one who knows the Italian character may be sure that such will always be the case.

It is one of the blessings of a free country that such efforts can be made, and the people gradually rescued from the degradation to which centuries of bad government have brought them. Even here

the priests do what they can to thwart the good that is being done; but happily without effect. I was told that the priest at Anacapri had instigated two persons to fire into the house of one of the English residents. At Rome, the priest would have been sheltered, and the criminals allowed to escape. But here it was otherwise. The guilty persons were punished, and the spiritual adviser was taken to Naples, and bound over to keep the peace towards his Protestant neighbour. Another case lately happened in Naples itself. One of the girls in the Italian Sunday-school appeared without her books. The priest, she said, had been during the week, and had taken them away. The committee, feeling that they might safely do so, summoned the priest before a magistrate. He was ordered to restore the books, or find new ones.

Such an incident sounds very matter-of-course to us in England; but here it is a thing previously unknown. At Rome, the very mention of it would provoke indignation: and it is to impartial administration of justice such as this that the Pope's newspapers give the name of sacrilege and oppression.

I may mention that over the door of the Campo

Santo at Anacapri, I read, written in modern characters, the following astonishing Latin couplet :—

> 'Disce subesse Deo, qui legum monita spernis :
> Cujus imperio tota natura subest.'

This seems to show that the schoolmaster is wanted for the priests, as well as for the people.

In taking leave of this lovely island, I must say something of its wild-flowers and plants. These are mostly the same as those of the mainland : but the rarer plants found there occur here in greater profusion, and there are some which I have seen only here. Perhaps the most attractive of these is the *Lithospermum rosmarinifolium*, found in the clefts of the rocks between Capri and Anacapri. As its name imports, in appearance it is like rosemary : the flower is exactly like that of our English *Lithospermum* (*Gromwell*), but single instead of in a cluster, and of the most vivid ultramarine blue. The banks abound in places with two varieties of a most graceful convolvulus or bindweed, with large carmine-coloured flowers. One of these, with deeply incised glaucous leaves scattered along the flexile branch, formed, I thought, when gathered in handfuls, a group hardly to be surpassed for beauty of form and combined colours. Many orchids new to us were

made to yield their roots, and in due time transferred from the tin case to the sketch-book, to be named by our Canterbury botanists.

Here, then, we bid adieu to Capri, and with it to the South. Our slowest of steamers is again bearing us over the bay, steering from Sorrento to Naples, not now over the smoothest of seas. To our right, Torre del Greco and Portici gleam white beneath the cone of Vesuvius, whose top is hidden in a mass of angry cloud. To the left, the crimson globe of the sun is all but touching the hills between Nisida and Posilippo, and marking the tumbling waves with a pathway of fire. It is an evening that makes us not sorry to see Naples at last visible clearly ahead. To-morrow, the day of rest: and then—northwards —homewards. In that route, however, will be 'fresh fields, and pastures new;' and on them, reader, we may meet and converse once more.

But before we do, I should like to add to my letter an account of one thing which I saw on that Sunday morning, May 1, 1864—the exhibition of the pretended blood of San Gennaro (St. Januarius), the patron saint of Naples. The miracle of the liquefaction, enacted twice a year, had taken place the day before; and the blood is shown to the people for

eight days, in the chapel of the saint in the Cathedral. Thither I went early in the morning, and found it densely crowded. On informing the attendants that I was a stranger, I was shown, with eight or ten more English, into the space within the altar rails. In the front row at the rails, knelt a number of women, young and old, who claim to be the kindred of the lady who gathered up the saint's blood at the time of his martyrdom. Of them more by-and-by. I will now describe what took place. First, there was a great lighting of candles, without which no ceremony takes place in the Roman Catholic Church. While this was doing, the women at the front rail began howling and screaming, literally with all their might: some the *Gloria Patri*, some the Creed, some calling on the Saint, some shrieking inarticulately at the top of their voices. The noise was deafening, and the effect, to a stranger, ludicrous in the extreme. Meanwhile a gilt bust of St. Januarius was brought in, placed on a pedestal, and arrayed in a robe and a red mitre, the women still howling and shrieking at him. Next, the red mitre being taken off, a golden one was put on, and six candles were lit before the image. Then enter on the right a procession of priests, one holding the vessel with the blood in a sort of silver mon-

strance, which he turned about continually, holding them close to us to show us that they held liquid. There are two glass phials, half filled with a transparent fluid, not at all resembling blood, but more like port-wine and water. In one of them floats a dark substance, said to be a piece of the sponge with which the blood was gathered up. On the appearance of the procession, the women redoubled their screams, crying and sobbing, as it were for joy. The priest then went round, offering the phials to them to kiss, and touching their heads with them. I will make no comment on this scene, further than to remind the reader that Gavazzi offered to perform the miracle of the liquefaction at any time and in the presence of any number of priests: and that the priests have it in their power to withhold or perform it as may suit them, for political or other reasons. The refusal of the blood to liquefy is accounted a bad omen, and might give rise to serious troubles among the excitable population. On one occasion of such refusal, the French General then in command of Naples sent a message to the officiating priest that, if the liquefaction did not take place within a few minutes, he, the priest, would be taken out and shot. On which the miracle immediately took place. It is to be hoped

that before many years have passed, education, now so rapidly advancing in Naples, may sweep away San Gennaro, and make this disgusting imposture a thing of the past.

From it, to our own Church service, could contrast be greater? From villany working on ignorance, to the quietness and confidence of united prayer, and the pure sound of the holy Word of God?

VI.

CENTRAL ITALY.

I BEGAN my last letter by describing how great was the contrast between Rome and Naples in Easter week, when Rome was at its fullest. What then does the reader suppose the contrast was between Naples and Rome, five weeks after, when Rome was at its emptiest? Really nothing less than that between a city of the living and a city of the dead. As we entered Rome from the station by Diocletian's baths, hardly a soul was to be seen in the streets: only two carriages were on the stand by the Triton: the Piazza di Spagna was empty, and getting green with tufts of grass in the pavement: and solitary, through the vacant Babuino, almost afraid of the rattle of our carriage, we drove to our hotel in the Piazza del Popolo, silent, save the splashing of the water from the mouths of

the lionesses at the foot of the obelisk. The first sight in the morning was novel to us. At this season, they begin to drive the goats into the city to be milked: and when we looked out of our windows, five large flocks occupied the whole Piazza.

Lodging after lodging was looked up, but our friends were gone: some stray sights before omitted were visited, but we had them all to ourselves: no busy English families poring into bas-reliefs, with red Murray in hand—no pale-haired German students, in troops, redolent of knaster: the long long gallery of Vatican sculptures, with no relief but the little black spot past the iron gate half-way, resolving itself, when nearer, into the three drowsy custodi, cowering over the charcoal brazier. Such was Rome. But none the more did the Papal policy sleep: none the more was 'non possumus' off his guard. The same incidents of street murders, and large missions of sacred banditti, were in men's mouths: the same ever-varying rumours, like those of old: 'Is Philip dead? No, by heaven, but he is ill:' the same, nay, even more frequent reports of arrest and exile of quiet and harmless citizens: all these go on, and will go on till the end of the chapter: till the mighty change shall come in God's good time, and sweep

all this monstrous fabric of falsehood, and fraud, and greediness, and cruelty, into the dark pages of the history of abuses that were, but are not.

So farewell Rome, with all thy light and all thy darkness, all thy beauty and all thy deformity, all thy glory and all thy shame. No place on earth is so lovely; as this early morning light falls rosy on the great cupola, and the mole of Hadrian, and gilds the villa and its cypresses on Monte Mario, and plays in long ripples of orange on the reaches of the Tiber; as we pass out through the groups of goats of which Virgil sang, watched by shepherds from whom he may have taken his Tityrus; as we read the gentle inscription over the Porta del Popolo, 'Felici faustoque ingressui,'—'To a happy and prosperous entrance,' we could almost for a moment dream that ultramontanism were true; that in this happy bright corner of the earth peace and truth were destined ever to abide, and from this to diffuse their blessed influences. But there rises up in the thought behind, as we pass out, all that dark moral cloud of cruelty, and avarice, and lust, and murder, which yet broods over the lovely city; and the heart swells with humble thankfulness to God, that we belong to and are on our way to a land where

at least, amidst many imperfections and sins, truth is truth, and the Church of Christ is not doing the work of Satan.

The treasures of history, of art, and of nature, are lavishly poured out along the line of road which leads from Rome to Florence by Perugia. I should doubt whether it would be easy to mention any other journey of equal length, presenting so many objects of varied interest. It may perhaps serve as an agreeable reminder to those of my readers who have made the journey, and may tempt the yet untravelled to choose that route, if we pass in review some of its leading incidents. For those whose interest depends neither on the recollection nor on the anticipation of travel, such a description may perhaps serve, like a moving panorama, to invest with something more like reality that which is never to form part of their own experience.

We are two miles from the gate of Rome. As we cross the Ponte Molle, we glance up and down the broad and rapid Tiber, little knowing how long we shall have him as the companion of our journey. At once the road diverges from that by Siena, and at once its character of greater interest begins. Skirting on the left the noble bluffs of volcanic rock

which distinguish this portion of the Campagna, and leaving on the right the bold headland of the citadel of Fidenæ, and the continually gleaming reaches of the beautiful river,—crossing the fatal Cremera, which comes down from Veii, we toil at length up the steep ascent of the little defile called Prima Porta, and pass out from the well-known region of our Roman walks and rides, into lands before untrodden.

There is one object of interest behind us as we pass on, and one before us. The great cupola, seen only in glimpses on the other road, is visible for many and many a mile on this, even till the eye is weary with tracing it on the faint blue horizon: even till we said, 'If we could but see it, there must be St. Peter's.'

The other object, ever increasing in beauty as we advance, is Soracté. Seen from Rome, this solitary mountain, always interesting from its mention in Horace, is not of comely outline. It has been compared to a wave on the point of breaking: there is a sinuous line rising from the right, and then there are three small lumps descending more steeply to the left. But as we pass on to-day, a mountain form gradually reveals itself, of wonderful symmetry and

beauty. Nor is this improvement lost as we proceed. To-morrow we shall meet Soracté again.

Look back—for here, where the picturesque village and château of Castel Nuovo hang over the glen beneath us, is our last view of the Alban hills; and here, where we cease climbing this shoulder of the western spur of Soracté, we must bid farewell to the well-known peak of Monte Gennaro.

But now we are becoming entangled in a network of glens, rocky, and honeycombed with Etruscan sepulchres. This old city, which we enter through steep walls of tufa rock, is Civita Castellana; an island in the midst of rocky gorges. How true this description is, may be imagined, when it is told, that owing to the breaking down of a bridge over one of them, our carriage had to go six miles round to join us (who crossed by a foot bridge) on the other side.

We have made good way to-day, and the sun has yet two hours to shine; let us explore the ruins of Falerii, four miles distant. This celebrated city, unlike the other rivals of Rome, has preserved entire the circuit of her ancient walls. Not one ancient building is standing within them: they have survived all that they were erected to defend.

It was very fine to see the enormous masses of travertine masonry glowing in the rays of the setting sun, and throwing their long purple shadows on the bright fresh green of the spring grass and blossoming thickets. And most of all, where the walls, skirting one of the deep glens, are built down even into its depths, presenting a face of solid masonry not less than fifty feet in height. One longed to have a painter there, to catch the warm glow of the great wall, lichened and weather-stained, as it descended into the verdure, and then into the deep shadow, of the underlying ravine; then the same was again repeated, but with all the varieties of receding colour, as, promontory after promontory, the defences ran up the glen; till at length a barrier of bright rocks closed in its head, over which, after a belt of wooded country, rose the graceful group of Soracté, in loveliest, tenderest blue. But no painter could have given us the fragrance of the spring-flowers which filled the air, nor the gushing notes of many nightingales from the balmy thickets below.

We woke next morning to discover that the whole staff of male servants in our inn had been arrested during the night, and were in prison, for singing Garibaldi's hymn at a café.

From all chance of further such adventure we soon are delivered, and we seem to breathe freer as, a few miles on, we cross the Tiber at Ponte Felice, and are once more in the kingdom of Italy. Truly, the domains of the *clergyman-king* have grievously shrunk up in this quarter. Only realise in thought what they once were. All that fine stretch of country before us, for scores and scores of miles, away to Perugia, and Bologna, and Ravenna,—all that to our right, which we shall not touch, down to Macerata, and Ancona, and Pesara,—slipped from the hand that grasped it, and past hope of return;—the yet only half-paid fine for centuries of foul wrong, culminating in that day of blood at Perugia. 'Four hundred of our fathers and brothers, since my memory,' said a Bolognese to me, 'have been laid in yonder Campo Santo by Papal executions, and four hundred more by Austrian. If a man killed another, he was sent to the galleys; but if a man said "I am a Liberal," he was had out and shot. And there, Signor, you have eight hundred reasons why we detest the Pope.'

But while we cannot help these thoughts crossing the mind, let us rather look down the river which we have just crossed, and rejoice in its noble windings

through the rich green of this meadowed valley, and in Soracté seen towering in beauty at the head of it.

And thus we pass on, through a land of hill and dale, of olive and vine, till a deep wooded gorge is seen on the left, and its bank on the right is crowned with walls and towers, and our vetturino announces NARNI. That milky stream then, threading the bottom of the gorge, is the 'sulphurous Nar;' and I observed, by the line of newly-bared rock which may be traced along its farther bank, that the travellers by the future railway will accompany its current through this magnificent glen.

At the point where the river, narrowing from the plain above, enters the defile, are the grand ruins of Augustus's bridge, still striding half across with their massive broken arches. This, with the hardly less picturesque mediæval bridge at a lower level, the towering sides of the wooded glen, the milky river below, and a convent, with its towers and roofs seen perched on a rock through one of the Roman arches, is a noble subject for a painter.

From Narni, having passed under the frowning battlements and towers of the old city on its hill, we cross the fertile plain to TERNI. Much has

been said and sung of the celebrated falls: among other encomia, it has been declared by Lord Byron, that 'they are worth all the cascades in Switzerland put together.' We saw them under every advantage. There had been a shower in the afternoon, and the leaves were yet glistening with the drops; it was an evening almost cloudless, and of tender, genial sunshine. Every thicket was musical with nightingales, and every rill was bounding along with its full tribute to the main stream. As we walked eastward up the glen, and came within sight of the spray of the great fall, a lovely rainbow spanned its ravine. At length we stand facing it: our voices silenced by its roar, and our faces wetted by its spray. And now, after some minutes' contemplation, what is the verdict? With all respect to Lord Byron, this: that we prefer the most insignificant cascade in Switzerland to all this pomp of waters. And why? Not that there is not here majesty and beauty: not that anything could be mentioned as wanting which the most skilful designer of a waterfall could suggest: but because, too manifestly, here *is* human design: because here, as at Tivoli, the great Architect of nature never placed the fall where we now find it. We are in

a land of hills and dales, but not of gigantic cascades, both here and at Tivoli. This beautiful glen, that sudden dip in the tufa hills, were never intended by the Creator for the theatre of such gigantic accidents of water as these. The falls are like the Euphrates turned into the herb-garden, in the ancient story: they have no attendant circumstances to justify them, no serrated pomp of central Oberland climbing the sky behind them: it is a Ruysdael's waterfall in its gilt frame hung against a wall; or, if we seek further for a similitude, a lion in a cage of wires: we pay our money, and we see our sight, and we betake ourselves home, and all is done.

But bring me to the meanest offspring of the grand mountain mist or the azure-caverned glacier, and Nature, with her full furnished treasures, is before me and about me. That dash and thunder of the cataract which is around and beneath, is not the sickly serenade of the paid musician, but the wild native clamour of the rocks and the pines: yon purple precipice deepening into shadow, yon dazzling field of snow melting into the sky above it,—nay, every sudden turn and plunge in the jagged glen, all bear their part and send the tribute of their

harmonies to the glorious whole. At Terni and Tivoli, I stand and criticise: at Handek and the Reichenbach, I am made humbler and wiser.

On again the next day, and again through a country of luxuriant verdure and swelling hills and warbling nightingales, till we begin, by the aid of supplementary oxen, to climb the winding ascent of Monte Somma, and look down through the oak forests on the fading blue of the land we have left behind. Before long we descend upon Spoleto, and having explored its steep picturesque streets, its venerable cathedral, and its citadel-prison, and enjoyed the grand stretch of prospect from the bastions of the latter, we speed forward to gain Foligno, our halting-place for the day of rest.

But before we leave Spoleto, let me recall our inspection of that free-Italy prison: the openness and courtesy of its authorities: the creditable desire that all should be seen and appreciated: the admirable and humane regulations, and efficient classification and superintendence. If there was one defect, it was in a matter which it appears to me that no foreigners ever understand, — I mean, ventilation. The rooms devoted to some of the trades were very close: and the pallid looks both of the prisoners

and of the attendants seemed to show that confinement in such an atmosphere was telling upon their health.

Between Spoleto and Foligno, by the roadside, stands the beautiful little temple of Clitumnus, the god of the crystal stream of that name, which washes the rock at its base. Shortly before arriving at it, we stop the carriage at a bridge, and descend to the source.

And here let me say, that among beautiful objects in nature, there is hardly one that gives purer pleasure to the eye than the clear spring gushing out from the overhanging rock, or rising out of the sandy depths of the soil. The former condition is most frequent in limestone countries: the latter, in the alluvial valleys which intersect chalky hills. Among the finest examples of the former, may be mentioned the glorious unfathomed pool at Vaucluse, where the white pebble may be watched descending into the deepening blue, till lost to the keenest sight: where the clear bright stream slides away between masses of greenest maidenhair, or dashes with its silver spray the hollowed rocks of amber-tinted limestone. Such a stream too once had Cheddar, the grandest rocky defile I know:

but this was before the pure waters were clouded: for one day, some mysterious channel brought in the milky current from a distant lead-mine, and the trout which used to flash in the depths lay poisoned on the surface, and the glory of the pool had departed. Among the nobler examples of this kind of source may be mentioned the ever-abounding and magnificent outburst of water at the east end of Wells Cathedral, surging up in a boiling heap in the midst of a crystal pool, then bounding over the fall which carries it into the Bishop's moat, where it rests in glassy clearness over the many-coloured forests of branching or feathery or star-like water-weeds. Nor is it for lack of examples that we are passing by the coombs of the Quantocks, and the strange resounding caverns of Craven, that land of wild underground waters; or the tamer cradles of rivers, the seven wells of the Thames on the hill over Cheltenham,—the Danube pool by the Schloss at Donaueschingen,—or even the Wells Chapel amidst the chalk by Canterbury, where the Little Stour oozes first through the gravel by the walls of the solitary ruin.

But now back to the Clitumnus. And here we stand at the foot of the bridge, or rather viaduct,

for its wall is not arched but solid, and only on this side of it does the river begin. And he begins full-grown—rising from the ground in many peaceful springs, each clear as light, each carrying up, as it rises, its little dancing columns of white sand, rising and falling like jets of steam from its depths. And from this point it flows on, turning ere long a picturesque old mill, with many turreted chimneys, and dark arcades; and immediately we are upon the temple, built, as I said, on a small rock above the stream. The present building is evidently Christian. We might have guessed this from the late character of its spirally fluted columns; but it is placed beyond all doubt by the symbols which are inwrought in the stone of the façade. Still I suspect that the foundation and basement are the old Pagan ones, and that the present temple has been erected on them by some one who loved the little gem, and determined that it should lose none of its beauty in his 'restoration.' It may have been ruined when the Northern tempest burst over Italy, and afterwards rebuilt as we now see it. It is the Rosslyn Chapel of Greek architecture: simple and elegant in form, but encrusted with the richest and most elaborate

decoration. The shape is that the most usual in small temples,—oblong, with a portico or pronaos facing the river, supported by four richly-ornamented columns, the two outer of which are spirally-fluted, while the two inner are worked with the scale pattern. From the sides come two little gabled projections, somewhat after the manner of transepts. Beneath, in the basement, are several small cells. In one, to the right, is a beautiful little shrine, evidently of ancient work. This once had pillars of very precious marble, which were carried to Paris by the French, and never restored. The colour of the stone of which the temple is built is a warm yellowish-brown. Immediately beneath glides the stream, clear as glass, and tracked, as the eye follows its onward course, by a line of deeper and more massive verdure, even in the midst of this most fertile valley.

And so we pass on, by crumbled machicolated towers and wayside ruins lit up with the glow of sunset, to the old earthquake-shaken city of Foligno, rich in Gothic churches and native pictures.

Among an Englishman's memories of a foreign tour, the Sundays shine out with a peculiar charm. They are peaceful halting-times, free from the dis-

traction of travel and sight-seeing; rallying points for his scattered thoughts. Never has the 'quietness and confidence' of the English liturgy fallen so sweetly on his soul, as when, in the foreign inn, with a few perhaps of his countrymen gathered around, he reads, or hears read, its Sunday morning prayer: or, in the larger city, follows the stream of English to the 'place where prayer is wont to be made,' and, with his brethren and sisters, is strengthened and refreshed at the Holy Table.

For the great temptation of foreign travel is, to allow the inner thoughts of the heart to become distracted and dissipated: to forget English belief and English practice when we are off English soil. This is occasioned partly by the very whirl and importunity of daily sight-seeing and rushing hither and thither; partly also it is the effect on the mind of the constant contemplation of a degraded and paganized form of Christianity. The direct tendency of Romanism is to produce infidelity. This it has done most effectually among its own adherents, and very generally in proportion to the degree of their adherence to it. An intelligent physician in Belgium, who attended a dear friend of mine, was remonstrated with, in the course of

conversation, for the laxity and scantiness of his belief. His answer was curious; and, however startling at first, is worth bearing in mind, as furnishing a key to the state of men's thoughts within and about the Church of Rome. '*My* belief?' he exclaimed: 'why, *I* believe in many things that you believe in: I believe in a Supreme Being; and, in some sense, in a future state: but my brother is an Abbé, and, *of course, he believes nothing.*' Depend upon it, this testimony, however it may admit of many exceptions, is, in the main, true. Devotees there are, and will be, to every form of belief, however much that belief may outrage reason and conscience; and persons there will be who cannot, or do not, use common sense, and thus follow whither they are led, unintelligently; but between and among these is the great bulk of the thinking population; and these, whether plain men or scholars, are, in Roman Catholic countries, almost invariably unbelievers. Let any mystery of their faith be mentioned, or any miracle, or superstition, on which the priesthood live and thrive, and you will instantly see, by the open scorn in general society,—by the silent repudiation on the part of more guarded men,—by the tone in which the subject is treated

among the priests themselves,—that earnest belief is almost altogether wanting.

He who moves along in an atmosphere of this kind, can hardly help being tainted by it. Childlike belief and simple trust, grounded on the warrant of reasonable evidence,—the precious heritage of the English mind,—are apt to be weakened and forgotten, where evidence goes for nothing, and belief has almost ceased to be. And this it is which makes our Sundays abroad so valuable. The quiet reassurance of our believing and loving and trusting liturgy; the exaltation of the Blessed Son of God as the One Sacrifice for sin, and the glorified Lord of our renewed nature: the constant supplication for the present influence of the abiding personal Spirit; and these urged, not in superstition, but in all soberness of mind and calmness of judgment, tend to recall the trifling and dissipated thoughts: tend to carry home to the inner soul the conviction, that all the show and glitter around is not Christianity, and must not be mistaken for it: serve as a rallying-point for good resolves forgotten, and flagging energies.

Nor of less value is the calm which these days of rest bring over the whole frame and temper. There

is ever much in foreign travel to tease and irritate; and the effect of this on the mind, as it accumulates day after day, is most undesirable. Seasons of repose, always valuable, are then most valuable, when there is danger of losing the balance of the character, and becoming fretful and discourteous.

And so have passed, one after another, these blessed days: the quiet service at home, and reading, and writing, through the morning: the wander through old churches, giving up the mind to the spirit of the place: the peaceful stroll in the evening, by still waters, or over rocky solitudes, or beside the tumbling sea: the sitting amidst the falling shadows, and talking of home, and mixing in spirit with those we love; and then the meal so peculiarly English, which even an English poet has dared to celebrate; and after it, the night closing in with prayer, the lying down in peace, and taking rest: these are the memories of our foreign Sundays—beams of grateful English sunshine, amidst the withering heat and blinding glare.

But the day of rest, and the night of rest, are over: the vetturino is announced as ready below, and much is before us to-day, for to-day we visit ASSISI. I shall not attempt a general description of my own,

but shall ask my reader's permission to quote once more the beautiful passage, already cited by Murray, from an article in the *Quarterly Review*, No. 208:—

'As the Tiber leaves the shade thrown by the heights crowned with the Etruscan Perugia for the sunny meadows of a wide and fertile valley, its yet unsullied stream eddies round a spur of the Apennines. This solitary hill is clothed at its base with the olive and the vine, but where the winter winds sweep it with their chill blast it is naked and bare of verdure. As the setting sun throws its last rays upon its rugged sides, it glows with a golden light, and scatters infinite purple shadows from its frowning rocks. To an ancient town built on this barren declivity came St. Francis, after a life of perilous wandering, from the bright world below, to die. His profession of poverty, abstinence, and humility, whilst it exalted beggary into a holy virtue, had nevertheless laid the foundation of a religious brotherhood that in no ways neglected worldly influence and power. He had scarcely died—covered by another's cloak cast over his wasted body eaten with sores—than there arose over his ashes such a monument as Italy, with her wonders of art, has rarely seen. An architect was invited from Germany to fashion the

edifice after the new order of architecture. The steep and rocky slope afforded no sufficient level space for the foundations; but in these days men had invention in the arts, and trusted to their own genius, instead of holding only to those who had gone before them. Having probably no treatises on architecture to refer to for an "authority," he built boldly against the mountain, piling one church upon another; the upper, vast, lofty, and admitting through its broad windows the bright rays of the sun: the lower—as if in the bowels of the earth—low, solemn, and almost shutting out the light of day. Around the holy edifice grew the convent, a vast building, resting upon a long line of arches clinging to the hill-sides. As the evening draws nigh, casting its deep shadows across the valley, the traveller beneath gazes upwards with feelings of wonder and delight at this graceful arcade supporting the massy convent; the ancient towers and walls of the silent town gathering around, and the purple rocks rising high above—all still glowing in the lingering sunbeams—a scene scarcely to be surpassed in any clime for its sublime beauty.'

Such is Assisi—the cradle and the grave of one of the most extraordinary of the enthusiasts of his-

tory. It is impossible not to be carried away with admiration, as we read of the ardent piety, the simple self-denial, the burning zeal, of Francis of Assisi; impossible not to admire also the cleverness with which that Church which is essentially of this world, wiser in her generation than poor St. Francis, has turned all his enthusiasm to her profit and power. There hardly can be imagined a more flagrant violation of the whole spirit of the rule of St. Francis, than the entire historic course and proceeding of the order which he founded. Every wrought stone of these grand churches, every tint, yet glowing in the midst of decay, of these glorious frescoes of Cimabue and Giotto, is a sin against the first principles of his promulgated mission.

But yet another feeling supervenes, when we look back on our travel in these fair lands, and reflect on the enormous mass of superstitious blasphemy which has accumulated round the name and life of Francis of Assisi. Much of this, as usual in such cases, owes its existence to the invention of later biographers: but much also was of contemporary origin —the fruit of enthusiasm and superstition accompanying his course. I need not tell the reader who is conversant with Roman Catholic countries,

that the name and history of St. Francis have become, shall it be said identified with, or substituted for, those of our divine Lord? *Conformity with Christ* was so interpreted in his case, as to mean that what Christ did, he did; his birth was foreshown by a prophetess: 'he was born, by divine suggestion, in a stable: angels rejoiced: even peace and good will were announced, though by a human voice. An angel, like old Simeon, bore him at the font.'[1] Nay, his body is said to have been impressed with the five wounds of our blessed Lord; and like Him, Francis was transfigured, and that not once, but twenty times. The former story, now become, according to Dean Milman's strong expression, 'almost the creed of (Roman) Christendom,'—originally suggested by a misinterpretation of St. Paul's expression in Gal. vi. 17,—has found not only believers, but imitators, even in our own times. Its revolting representations are to be seen in all directions; disgracing the pencils of some of the greatest of painters, and daubed upon roadside tablets and by mountain paths. Those who wish to see the whole tissue of blasphemy carried to its height, should ascend the hill behind the town of Orta,

[1] See Milman, 'History of Latin Christianity,' iv. 171, note.

overlooking its lovely lake, where, if they have lately seen the wonderful scripture tableaux of our Lord's sufferings on the Monte Sacro at Varallo, they will behold a hideous succession of parodies of them,—St. Francis, and not our Lord, being the hero throughout.

But here we stand, all inconsistencies for the moment condoned or forgotten, within the magnificent upper church at Assisi. We have not yet advanced into the territory proper of the Italian Gothic; and it is an indescribable relief to our northern eyes, once more to see a long vista of goodly arches like this, and to look up at the rich interlaced groining, and follow it on to where the glowing windows terminate the apse over the altar. This whole church, above and below ground, is a sanctuary of early art. Those upper frescoes, of scriptural subjects, to this day almost as fresh and bright as when first seen, were painted by Cimabue at the close of the thirteenth century; these lower ones, of the life of St. Francis, so interesting for their characteristic details and contemporary portraits, by Giotto, about twenty years later. In the church beneath, again, are four of Giotto's most beautiful frescoes, inserted,—as are also those

other masterpieces of his in the church of the Incoronata at Naples,—in the triangular spaces between the groining-ribs of the vault. And in every direction is beauty: whether we regard the splendid wheel-windows, surrounded with rich carvings of men and animals; the whole painted glass throughout, contemporary with the upper building, and almost so with the lower, full of those deep rich tints peculiar to the churches of Central Italy, which caused an enthusiast to say of a window in the cathedral of Arezzo, that it was 'not made by human hands, but let down from heaven for the consolation of men:' the venerable bronze gates, by which the lower church is entered from the south: the various frescoes by ancient painters of renown, with which every wall-space and corner in the groining is filled; or the delicate and beautiful carvings in metal which decorate the altars and reliquaries.

The vast convent, so imposing from the outside, has no charms within. At present, in common with hundreds of conventual palaces in the kingdom of Italy, it is awaiting, with a diminished and diminishing establishment, the solution of the great problem, how far the healthy development of free human society is consistent with the presence in the midst

of it of orders of men and women bound by vows of disloyalty to society's first duties.

It may be easily imagined, when I say that there are several other churches, and an interesting Roman temple, all requiring examination, at Assisi, and that the great church of S. Maria degli Angeli, so connected with the history of St. Francis, also demanded a halt by the way, that the shades of a May evening were gathering around us; as we crossed the Tiber at the foot of the hill whereon rise the towers of Perugia. What we saw there, under the hindrance of the worst of weather, may serve for the opening of another letter.

VII.

NORTHERN ITALY.

A WET day. And Perugia to be seen. Here it lies, many-towered, beautiful, as we beheld it last evening, on its commanding hill: beneath are the windings of the Tiber, and the rich valley stretching away to Assisi, and Foligno, and Spoleto. But of all this to-day we shall see nothing, only a dark blue fog, pierced by the heavy lines of falling drops: only 'the splash close by, and the patter all round.' However, buildings and pictures we can see, more or less; and thus, there being no public carriages in Perugia, we pass the day, with sundry interpolated wadings under umbrellas through streets running with rivers, and under spouts pouring streams over our heads. Still, that was a memorable day. Perugia is the Nuremberg of Italy: full of public buildings,

and houses, quaint and beautiful, passed down unhurt from the middle ages to our own: full also, which Nuremberg is not, of exquisite examples of the highest art, the works of her world-renowned school of painters: for here it was that Pietro Perugino lived and painted and taught, and hence that he sent forth his scholars, Pinturicchio, Lo Spagna, and the immortal Raffaelle; besides others of lesser name, but lesser only by reason of juxtaposition with those greater ones. Of Perugino himself we have, in this his own city, as might be expected, abundant examples: of Raffaelle, but few. The most noteworthy is the exquisite little picture in the Conestabili-Staffa Palace, known as the Conestabili-Staffa Madonna. It is round, and only seven inches in circumference. The Virgin is seated, reading a book: the Divine Infant is lying in her lap, looking into the book: behind is a landscape, with snowy mountains.

The next morning was bright, and all the valleys sparkled in the sun, as we wound down the hill of Perugia on the way to Florence. The notable feature of the day's journey was the classical ground of the battle of Thrasymene, where, with the aid of Lord Broughton's excellent account in the notes to

'Childe Harold,' we traced the scene of Hannibal's ambush and Flaminius's fatal carelessness, and paused, as we crossed the Sanguinetto, to think on other cases in which popular names have preserved traces of events far back in history, and sometimes themselves long ago obliterated from memory. In my late parish of Wymeswold, on the borders of Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire, there is a field whose surface is broken into confused heaps, still known by the name of 'Dead Man's Grave;' but of what conflict those 'hummocks' are the traces, no one now can tell. In Westmoreland again, the comely field stretching between Pelter Bridge and Loughrigg is branded with the undelightful name of 'Cut-throat Meadow:' but how it got that name I could never ascertain: whether from a battle or skirmish of other days, or from some grim incident of robbery and murder nearer to our own.

Such thoughts occupy me as we climb from the field of Thrasymene, and look back on its blue lake, the same in its quiet beauty now, with its fringing oaks and receding promontories, as when the Carthaginian looked on it from these hills, and marked it as the spot for his stratagem. Then we pass along, with the wide plain of Chiana on our left, and Siena

seen far across it on its lofty hill, and on again till, having paused for bait under the height crowned by the towers of Cortona, we reached Arezzo, our last night's halt before Florence.

Notes like these spring out of leisure moments, and therefore I have but little to say of Florence. It is a place where the treasures of art are so plentiful, as to make any time that one has to give to it seem insufficient: and where historical memories lie so thick, that regret for not knowing more history seems always to supersede enjoyment. And this is more or less the case in all the great Italian towns of the middle ages. The History of Rome is the history of the world—the history of mankind: its historic sites are sources of pure pleasure—they recall one's past studies, and send one back to books which are full of sweet odours from the flowery fields of youth and childhood. But these republics of the middle ages seem to have been passed over in one's education: glorious and full of interest as their history is, it needs looking up in ponderous books: even 'Romola' cannot lift the weight from the annals of a time concerning which all of us ought to know. And so one goes about Florence, and Genoa, and Pisa, and even Venice,—rejoicing in-

deed in present beauty and past memories, as far as they are open to one, but ever with a painful sense of culpable ignorance: one resolves to read Sismondi and Hallam again, and look through Gibbon once more: but, alas! the next visit finds one almost equally ill-furnished and unprepared. Though some addition may have been made to the stock of information, it is but small compared with the great gap of blank ignorance yet left yawning behind.

I mention this drawback to our week in Florence, to account and apologize for so little being said of it here, not by way of leading the reader to suppose that our enjoyment of it was scanty, or that any visit to Florence can be aught but delightful. Very pleasant are the recollections of the beautiful city, stretched on both banks of its fair smooth river, spanned by its comely bridges: pleasant is it again to recall the glories of its churches and galleries, and cull from them such as still float in visible lineaments on the rushing tide of backward memory. First the dome—the dome of domes, of Brunelleschi's, towered over by that exquisite campanile of Giotto's, with its rich bands of colour: how fair was the sight, as we traced out the place where 'Grim Dante' used to sit and gaze on them,—a mass of

varied light written on the cloudless sky of unfathomed blue: varied, but blended, as never in any other building that we had seen; the warm yellow of the lighter marbles separated, but not disunited, by the ever-recurring bands of dark; or glowing into red where the kisses of the sun had been hottest; or fading again into white where the shadows mostly haunted, or where the renovating hand had been waging conflict with decay. Fair beyond measure again were those frescoed walls, in Santa Croce, and the Carmine, and the Trinità, and Santa Maria Novella, and the Palazzo Riccardi, and above all, the calm heavenly faces by Fra Angelico in the convent cells of San Marco. It was there too that I (for I was of necessity alone) saw and copied with delight an inscription, 'These cells inhabited the Venerable Father, brother Hieronymus Savonarola, an apostolic man.' Nor, while speaking of inscriptions, can I forget another, on the walls of the Casa Guidi, in the Oltr' Arno: 'Here wrote, and died, Elizabeth Barrett Browning; who in the heart of a woman united the science of a sage and the spirit of a poet, and made with her verse a golden ring, binding Italy and England. Grateful Florence placed this memorial, 1861.'

Nor let us omit another kind of monument—the wonderful tombs of the Medici by Michael Angelo in the chapel of San Lorenzo, wild, sombre, majestic, gigantesque; nor that costly mausoleum, gorgeous in rare marbles, which lesser men of a degenerate age have erected to the whole Medicean dynasty. And how can I pass over the granary-church, 'Or San Michele,' with its rich arches and flashing colours, its rare tabernacle, and outside statues, raised time out of mind, and still in raising, by the various guilds of the city? How the Palazzo Vecchio, with its great hall built for Savonarola, and the Bargello, quaintest of quadrangles, with its lately-found Giotto's portrait of Dante?

And so passed our time in Florence, a happy but a tantalising visit, where were a hundred beautiful things to explore, and one is hurried from one to another for fear of missing any.[1]

Am I then decrying altogether such a method of seeing a foreign city? Far from it: this is not a case where 'drink deep, or taste not,' can be applied. Of course there is such a thing as absurdly hurrying through sight-seeing: but there is also such a thing as unreasonable blame of hasty

[1] See Note at the end of the volume.

travelling. After months of toil and sameness, when the spirits flag, and the digestion is out of gear, there is nothing so joyous and invigorating as the rush of rapid travel. Leave Canterbury after breakfast at half-past eight: reach Paris at six, the thoughts full of some new book, mastered during the journey: dine at the Lyons or Strasburg terminus: in the train again at half-past eight—and you may breakfast in Switzerland, and dine in the midst of the Bernese Alps. And notwithstanding the fatigue of the journey, what vigour and briskness you have gained in these two days! And how braced up and renovated you will return, as rapidly, at the end of your fortnight's Alpine ramble!

But we must return to Florence. One picture, in the Tribune at the Uffizi Gallery, especially struck me. The *Madonna del Cardellino* (Our Lady of the Goldfinch) is one of the loveliest works of Raffaelle. The Virgin is sitting on a rock, in a flowery meadow. Behind, are the usual light and feathery trees, growing on the bank of a stream, which passes off to the left in a rocky bend, and is crossed by a bridge of a single arch. To the right, the opposite bank slopes upward in a

gentle glade, across which is a village, backed by two distant mountain-peaks.

In front of the sitting matronly figure of the Virgin are the holy children, our Lord and the Baptist, one on either side of her right knee. She has been reading, and the approach of St. John has caused her to look off her book (which is open in her left hand) at the new comer, which she does with a look of holy love and gentleness, at the same time caressingly drawing him to her with her right hand, which touches his little body under the right arm. In both hands, which rest across the Virgin's knee, he holds a captive goldfinch, which he has brought with childish glee as an offering to the Holy Child. The infant Jesus, standing between his mother's knees, with one foot placed on her foot, and her hand with the open book close above his shoulder, regards the Baptist with an upward look of gentle solemnity, at the same time that He holds his bent hand over the head of the bird.

So much for mere description. The inner feeling of the picture, the motive which has prompted it, has surely hardly ever been surpassed. The Blessed Virgin, in casting her arm round the infant St.

John, looks down on him with a holy complacency for the testimony which he is to bear to her Son. Notice the human boyish glee with which the Baptist presents the captured goldfinch, and, on the other hand, the divine look, even of majesty and creative love, with which the infant Jesus, laying his hand on the head of the bird, half reproves St. John, as it were saying, 'Love them, and hurt them not.' Notice too the unfrightened calm of the bird itself, passive under the hand of its loving Creator. All these are features of the very highest power of human art. Again, in accompaniments, all is as it should be. The Virgin, modestly and beautifully draped: St. John, girt about the loins, not only in accord with his well-known prophetic costume, but also as partaking of sinful humanity, and therefore needing such cincture: the Child Redeemer, with a slight cincture, just to suggest motherly care, but not over the part usually concealed, as indeed it never ought to be, seeing that in Him was no sin, and that it is this spotless purity which is ever the leading idea in representations of Him as an infant. Notice too his foot, beautifully resting on that of his mother: the unity between them being thus wonderfully,

though slightly, kept up. Her eye has just been dwelling on the book of the Prophecies open in her hand: and thus the spectator's thought is ruled in accordance with the high mission of the Holy One of God, and thrown forward into the grand and blessed future. It is a holy and wonderful picture: I had not seen any in Italy which had struck or refreshed me more.

BOLOGNA is a name which I can never mention without a most pleasant recollection of the two days which we passed there. The beautiful journey from Florence over the Apennines introduced us to it: and after many miles descending by a mountain torrent silvered by the light of the full moon, and after long watching the fireflies, and at every stoppage listening to the nightingales, we at length found ourselves passing along the strange arcaded streets, and lodged at Herr Brun's comfortable Swiss Hotel. And the morrow, and the day after, revealed to us a new city, ranking in a different class from any we had before seen. The long lines of rich picturesque arcades: the vast unfinished churches: the enormous wealth of noble pictures: the curious old square towers rising in every direction from the houses: the two best known, the

Asinelli and the Garisenda, the former rising three hundred feet above the city with its slight inclination, the latter toppling to meet it with perilous-looking and unexampled obliquity: the high bearing and independence of the inhabitants, so that not a single beggar asked alms of us at Bologna: all these combined to bespeak for the city in our memories a place of its own, which it will ever continue to hold.

Let me say a few words on some of its distinguishing points. Bologna is emphatically the city of columns. Every street has its long shady arcades, with capitals often richly wrought: and to the west of the town, a colonnade of three miles in length, built at different times by the liberality of various individuals and societies among the citizens, leads up to the elevated church of La Madonna della Guardia. This fancy for colonnades has made Bologna a very picturesque city, and renders the exploration of its sights much more pleasant to the traveller, who is enabled to pass from church to church in the shade.

But Bologna is also a city of *towers*. They spring up in profusion from private houses and public edifices, unsightly enough when taken apart, gene-

rally mere quadrangular masses of brown brick, with no ornament except the holes once made for the scaffolding: but taken in the mass, they give an imposing air to the town, and group well in the street views. Not two only, but many of them, are out of the perpendicular, and thus produce an unusual effect. They seem not to have been built for any definite purpose, being useless for defence, and having no windows. If the highest of them all, the Torre degli Asinelli, was, as Mr. Murray says, merely a monument of family vanity, it was not for nothing that the family name was given.

But it is time to say something of the rich treasures of painting which Bologna possesses, in its churches and in its gallery. My readers probably know that the Bolognese school of painting had two distinct periods of excellence properly its own, one at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the other nearly a hundred years later. The greatest name of the first period is Francesco Francia; the greatest of the second are Domenichino and Guido.

In the remarks that follow, I speak merely as a passing observer, not with any pretensions to be a connoisseur in art. For calmness and holiness of

expression, Francia is perhaps unequalled among painters. It may be doubted whether Raffaelle himself ever surpassed the expression of these graces as seen in the Madonnas of Francia. There are other and higher qualities which were above his range; and in these he must yield to a few among his contemporaries: but in his own walk he is unrivalled. His Madonnas all have a strong family likeness: derived, in this case, most probably, not from any human prototype, but from that face only satisfying the painter's idea. The features are large and somewhat harsh; and under ordinary circumstances might be called those of a person who would hardly be chosen as the subject of ideal art. But every such view of them is precluded by the soul which shines through them, indicating faith, and humility, and submission, in their highest perfection. In his representations of the Divine Child, Francia takes quite as high a rank—next to Raffaelle, and by no long interval. Sinlessness and holiness were surely never more beautifully depicted than in those lovely infant forms, lying in the attitude of blessing, sometimes among the fresh flowers, sometimes on a carpet richly wrought by human hands: forms from which,

without any such affectation of effect as subsequent painters used, the light itself seems to shine, and the picture to derive its day: not smiling, but divinely complacent: complacent, not by reason of rest or satisfaction with surrounding circumstances, but by reason of a superhuman consciousness of a work of mighty love undertaken, and a meed of surpassing glory to be won.

Perhaps the figure of the Divine Child which best exemplifies this description is found in the picture marked 81 in the gallery at Bologna. He is lying, in simple nakedness, on a rich red carpet, and is supported by a white pillow, over which the carpet passes. Of these accessories, every thread is most delicately and carefully painted: no slovenly washes of meretricious colour, where He is to be served before whom all things are open; no perfunctory sparing of toil in serving Him who has given us all that is best. On his right hand kneels the Virgin Mother in adoration, her very face a Magnificat—praise, lowliness, confidence: next to her, Joseph, telling by his looks all the wonderful story, deeply, but simply. Two beautiful angels kneel, one on either side—hereafter perhaps to kneel in like manner in the tomb.

Their faces seemed to me notable for that which I have no doubt the painter intended to express—the pure abstraction of reverent adoration, unmingled with human sympathies. The face and figure of the Divine Infant are full of majesty, as He holds his hand in blessing towards the spectator, who symbolizes the world which He has come to save. Close to Him and to the ground, on his right, two beautiful goldfinches sit on a branch in trustful repose: on his left springs a plant of the meadow-trefoil. Thus lightly and reverently has the master touched the mystery of the Blessed Trinity: the goldfinch symbolising it by its colours, the trefoil by the form of its leaf.

Of the later masters of the school of Bologna, I am not qualified to judge. A grand picture always impresses us with a sense of its grandeur; a skilful effect defeats, so to speak, one's scheming thoughts with the triumph of its skill: but neither of these shoots a ray of light into the inner chamber of one's central feeling: neither of them abides with and blesses us. For Domenichino's grand picture of St. Jerome's last Communion, in the Vatican, I am bound to have all respect and much admiration: it conveys to my mind a wonderful representation

of a solemn scene: but when the scene is one where I have no right to be present, and the representation is of this obtrusive character, dragging into public light and all the blaze of upholstery the last passage of a fainting human soul, not all the majesty of that aged withered figure of the expiring saint, nor all the gorgeousness of the priest's robe, stiff with silk and gold, can ever give to the picture an abiding place in my heart and life. It is to me a marvel of skill, a miracle of colour; it is as if I had looked through a prism into that chamber, where I had better been kneeling with covered brow, praying for the departing soul.

Then again, who can forget the beautiful upturned face of Guido's St. Sebastian in the Capitol? Wonderful in its sweetness and expression of ecstasy, it leaves a track on the memory which is not easily obliterated. Yet, I venture to say, it is on the memory only, not in the heart of hearts. Guido Reni went no deeper into the subject than you see there on the canvas: all he cared for was to achieve that triumph which is before you. As regards the subject, this picture is surpassed by even the stiff St. Sebastians of the early Sienese school, much more by any one of the still conventional but

deeply expressive figures of the martyred soldier in the delightful works of Perugino.

These remarks, though made on pictures found elsewhere, will serve for the masterpieces of the two great painters which exist in abundance at Bologna. There is a magnificent picture of Guido's, the largest in the gallery there, called the Madonna della Pietà, and consisting of two parts—above, the Virgin with the dead body of Christ on her knees: below, the patron saints of Bologna. As a mass of colour, especially when seen through the vista of beautiful rooms and pictures, none can help being struck with its grandeur: but that is all. Before its next neighbour on the wall, the Francia described above, we all brought chairs, and sat, and returned again and again: before this, no one stood more than a minute.

I am quite aware how much more ought to be said on this subject, than I am saying, or intend to say here. I am aware what objections may fairly be brought against this way of estimating the merit, and the effect, of art. Were I to enter the lists against a defender of the school of the Caraccis, I dare say I should be signally defeated. But I seem to have within myself a reason for these im-

pressions, and to feel that they are linked to certain deeper principles, on which I think that, as between the champion of the Caraccis and myself, the victory might perhaps rest on the other side. So I put them down for the reader to notice, and to estimate as he may.

RAVENNA—strange old city—once the mistress of Rome—once on the Adriatic: now sunk to a fourth-rate inland provincial town: but richer in gorgeous treasures of ancient church decoration even than Rome herself. Our introduction to it was by a long railway journey in bright moonlight, through rich green lands sparkling with fireflies. The former capital of the West does not even possess a tolerable inn: and the grass grows in its only half-inhabited streets. But let me say a little of the wonders of its many churches.

The Cathedral has unhappily been modernized, retaining only, by its cylindrical tower, a feature almost peculiar to this town. But its ancient Baptistery remains as it was originally built in the fifth century; a small octagonal chapel, entirely encrusted, walls and roof, with the most splendid mosaics. So also does the private chapel in the Archbishop's palace close by: and so do many

other walls and chapels in the Ravenna churches. The gem of them all is the choir of the magnificent circular church of San Vitale, gorgeous as a piece of the Alhambra, and of great historical interest, seeing that its mosaics represent the court of Justinian and Theodora, and those notorious personages themselves. Nor must we forget the tomb of the Empress Galla Placidia, again with mosaic roof and walls, and with its three solemn sarcophagi, 'the only tombs of the Cæsars, oriental or occidental, which now remain in their original places.'

The largest array of mosaic pictures remaining in Ravenna, is in the church of St. Apollinare Nuovo, the old cathedral of the Arian bishops. The whole walls of the nave above the arches are covered with sixth-century mosaics, not in detached medallions, but in one long picture on each side. On the left, next the choir, is the Adoration of the Magi, who are followed in procession by as many as twenty-two virgins, proceeding out of the ancient city of Classis (see below) in white robes and with crowns in their hands. On the other side, the object next the choir is our Lord, in the act of blessing a procession of saints, headed by St. Martin (the patron of the

church under its former Arian bishops), and proceeding forth from the city of Ravenna.

The grandest of all the churches is the other St. Apollinare, called 'in Classe,' from being situated in the ancient city of that name, now destroyed. Here again the choir is lined with fine ancient mosaics of the sixth century.

Not far from this great solitary church is the famous pine-forest, extending for miles along the flats, and once on the shore of the Adriatic. Much as has been said and sung of this forest, it is perhaps hardly creditable to one's taste to confess to having been disappointed with it. The curious operations of the workmen and women employed in extracting the seeds from the cones seemed to us far better worth seeing than the forest itself, which, at least in the part reached from St. Apollinare, was no more than an ordinary pine wood, with thick undergrowth and winding foot-paths.

I have had reason however, since writing this, to believe that the fault of our disappointment was our own; or rather perhaps that of our driver, who declared that there was no other entrance than that first mentioned. A friend has given me an account of his visit, which clearly shows that there is another

road leading to the wood, and a magnificent glade of gigantic pines extending for miles along the coast. Such pieces of posthumous information bring some of the unavailing regrets which ever accompany the retrospect of travel.

FERRARA is a city which, even in stray notes, should not be altogether passed over. I am not giving an historical account, or much might be here said which should interest the reader: I disclaim all completeness, and jot down merely such things as, not set down in guide-books, seemed to me worthy of record.

Anything more unpleasant and less picturesque in effect than the old castle of Ferrara can hardly be imagined. It stands, in a moat filled with water, in the middle of the most public part of the town. It is exactly four-square, and at each corner is a square tower, all four exactly the same in size and in pattern of ornament. It might have been turned out of a Dutch toy-box: and its formal severity brings to the mind an irresistible idea of a stronghold of tyranny and oppression.

Ferrara possesses a small but very interesting picture-gallery, containing mainly the works of the Ferrarese school collected from churches and con-

vents in the city. To this deportation, now going on extensively in Italy, the stranger may be disposed at first sight to object; but when he has become accustomed to see the disgraceful way in which precious works of art have been treated by the monks and priests, he will rather rejoice that there is any chance of their being preserved to posterity.

I shall speak of two or three pictures in the Ferrara gallery, because I find hardly any mention made of it in the usual hand-books, and because the few pictures that are specified in Murray are for the most part wrongly named.

The first deserving notice is an immense fresco by Benvenuto Tisio, commonly called Garofalo. It was brought to the gallery from the repertory of the conventual buildings attached to the church of S. Andrea, and represents, in a complicated and curious allegory, the glory of the Church and the disgrace of the Synagogue. In the centre of the picture is our Lord on the Cross. On his right hand, the Church, a beautiful and stately female, sits on a throne composed of the four Evangelistic emblems—the man, the lion, the ox, and the eagle. Her hand is outstretched, and on it descends the

stream of blood from our Lord's pierced side, thence parting into three, and falling, in the form of straight lines or rays, on three groups below. The first represents a baptism; an attendant holds the child while the priest pours the water on its head. On the front of the font is inscribed '*initiat:*' *i. e.*, '*it* (the blood of Christ) *initiates.*' In the second, a priest is laying his hands, in the act of absolution, on the head of a penitent kneeling before him; and beneath is inscribed '*purgat:*' '*it cleanses.*' In the third, a priest is consecrating the sacred elements, and the inscription is '*perficit:*' '*it perfects.*' Underneath the enthroned figure is written '*Ecclesia*' . . . . (the rest is illegible: perhaps it was '*Novi Testamenti*'). From the limb of the Cross close to her proceed two arms: one pointing upward and holding a key: the other downward, holding a crown suspended. In the upper left-hand corner of the picture is represented St. Paul preaching at Athens, with the city of Ferrara in the background: and over it is a tablet suspended, on which is written, 'When in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.' Paul (1 Cor. i. 21).

From the foot of the Cross proceed also two arms: that on this side holds a cross towards an arch underground, over which is inscribed '*Limbus*,' and under which the imprisoned Fathers are seen praying. From our Lord a scroll is coming, with the words (I render them from the Vulgate Latin of Canticles ii. 14, in which they are quoted: our English version being very different in sense), 'Come, my dove, in the clefts of the rock: thou shalt be crowned from the head of Amanaim with the top of Sharon and Hermon.'

On the left hand of our Lord, which is the right of the picture, is the Synagogue, or Old Testament Church, represented as a withered and blindfolded female, seated on an ass with its head cut off and replaced, and its body otherwise hacked and mutilated. What this may import, I own I was at a loss to imagine: and I propound it to exercise the sagacity of others. A crown has fallen from her head, and on one side of it is inscribed '*cecidit*,' and on the other '*nostri:*' *i. e.*, taking the crown itself as part of the sentence, '*Our crown is fallen:*' and in her hand she holds a broken sceptre. Of the two arms which proceed from the limb of the Cross pointing towards her, one holds a key broken

in the midst and without its wards, while the other with a spear transfixes the female figure downwards through the neck. Beside her is a scroll, inscribed 'The Lord hath become as an enemy: He hath cast Israel headlong' (Lam. ii. 5).

On the right is a ruined building with broken columns, inscribed 'Templum Salomonis,' and two priests standing in it. Below, in the right-hand corner, is Aaron standing by an altar on which are two winged cherubs. A party of worshippers are bringing a lamb for sacrifice. Between this altar and the Cross, a youth is looking down a hole in a broken altar, up through which flames are bursting from Hell, which is represented below the foot of the Cross. Over the abyss the arm proceeding from the foot of the Cross on this side holds a key. Corresponding to the large tablet with the text from St. Paul, is another on this side bearing these words: 'Offer no more vain sacrifice: incense is an abomination' (Isa. i. 13). 'And when thou multipliest prayer I will not hear: for your hands are full of blood' (Isa. i. 15). Above this tablet are devils sitting on a cloud: above the other, clouds alone. At the very top, in the middle of the picture, is represented the Eternal Father, in glory, in the

midst of angels; those on the left side are playing on instruments, those on the right are shooting with bows. Round them rises a fortified wall, inscribed '*Paradisus*' and a scroll proceeds from its right-hand corner with these words, 'None shall enter but those who are written in the book of life.' Behind the whole allegory, stretches a landscape, mountains and sea, with three figures standing on the shore.

It has since occurred to me, that this picture, with its singularly opprobrious representation of the Synagogue, may possibly have had some reference, at the time when it was painted, to the fact, known in history, of the number and influence of the Jews at Ferrara. So much rancour of satire can hardly be accounted for, without the excitement of some special enmity.[1]

[1] Since the description in the text was written, I have seen Lady Eastlake's beautiful book on 'The History of our Lord, as illustrated by Christian Art.' In vol. ii. of that work, p. 200, is a description of the great Ferrara allegorical picture. It appears that other such representations are occasionally found. Lady Eastlake refers to one which I did not notice—a fresco lately uncovered in a chapel of the great Church of S. Petronio at Bologna. She well characterises these pictures as 'an insult both to art and morals; a cruel spectacle; a bad lesson; and a frightful pictorial monstrosity.'

I noticed a remarkable picture in this gallery by Victor Carpaccio, dated 1508, of the death of the Virgin. The group round the bed, and the lifeless form itself, are simply and powerfully given: but one point seemed to me specially worthy of notice; that whereas in later times, and even close upon this time, it was the practice, in representing this event, to paint the Virgin ascending bodily into heaven, in this case her soul, represented as usual by a small and shadowy naked figure, is kneeling before our Lord, who is enthroned above in glory. This at least is as it should be.

It would be presumptuous to write of VENICE, after Ruskin's glowing descriptions. Still it may be permitted us to say something of the strange mixed feeling which one week spent there has left upon the mind: to revive the recollections of that pleasant new world, with its silent avenues of gliding gondolas, and its carved palace fronts, rich in endless interchange of delicate tracery: to tread once more that undulating pavement of its unrivalled cathedral, wondering at the gloom of its mellowed gold, and tracing the giant figures that float dimly in the mosaic of its vaults: to pass once more, as in a dream, over the polished calm of its sheltered

lagoon, to far-off islands, with churches of untold antiquity: to watch, as sunny bank or gay gable goes by, the interlacing play, on the ripple, of all the hues of the prism: to pass from nature to art, and stand before the great colourists, Titian, and Cagliari, and Tintoret, nor wonder at their skill, with such a school to learn in:—and then to turn to men, and to circumstances, of the days that now are, and to gaze on the utter desolation of all this beauty, and listen to the cry of suffering and oppression which goes up from them who dwell in this fair home.

Truly it requires no particular political bias, no par disposed to hear one strain only, to perceive this. It proceeds from all classes, and is uttered by every one. Even the officials themselves were not chary of the facts which form its evidence The object of the present rulers of Venice seems to be nothing less than the annihilation of the city. Its commerce is discouraged, its exports and imports are yearly and enormously decreasing; nothing is undertaken by way of improvement, which can possibly be helped; and by a singular mixture of want of policy with want of humanity, no expedient is omitted which may serve to fret the sore, and

add to the impatience of the people under the Austrian yoke.

The results of this impolicy may easily be imagined. Venice is falling fast into ruin. Her magnificent palaces, deserted by their Venetian owners, are boarded up, or turned into 'pensions' for tourists, or have become the property of alien, and in some cases unworthy occupants. A very large portion of her population has migrated into free Italy. In fact, the queen of the Adriatic has become a vast barrack, and her gay colours now are made up of the glittering uniforms of the garrison of occupation.

Still, we heard warm hopes of a change confidently expressed. 'If I thought,' said a Venetian to me, 'that there was no hope for Venice, I would leave it to-morrow.'

'And what is your hope?' I asked.

'Partly,' he replied, 'the present war in Denmark: partly the change which must one day happen at Rome: but above all, the late manifestation of public opinion in England. It was public opinion in England, more than Louis Napoleon, more even than Garibaldi, which brought about the liberation of Italy: and when it has been mani-

fested as it has been now, no power in Europe can withstand it.' The testimony was striking: but I could not feel the confidence expressed by my friend, nor could I quite agree with him in his estimate of our part in the good work of 1859.

Does any one doubt the power of high Christian art to carry elevating and blessed thoughts into the mind? Let him come with me—where shall I say, in this country so rich in treasures of the very highest art? Let us go together to the old Gothic church of Santa Corona at VICENZA, and stand where, under a gorgeously carved cinque-cento canopy, looks out, instinct with life and colour, that wonderful Baptism of Our Lord, by Giovanni Bellini. Let us remain long, and look earnestly: for there is indeed much to be seen. That central Figure, standing with hands folded on His bosom, so gentle, so majestic, so perfect in blameless humanity, O what labour of reverent thought, what toil of ceaseless meditation, what changes of fair purpose oscillating into clearest vision of ideal truth, must it have cost the great painter, before he put forth that which we now see! It is as impossible to find aught but Love and Majesty in the Divine

countenance, as it is to discover a blemish on the complexion of that Body, which seems to give forth light from itself, as He stands in his obedience, fulfilling all righteousness. And even on the accessories to this Figure, we see the same loving and reverent toil bestowed. The cincture, where alone the Body is hidden from view, is no web of man's weaving, or, if it were, it is of hers, whose heart was full of divine thoughts as she wove: so bright and clear is the tint, so exquisitely careful and delicate every fold where light may play or colour vary. And look under the Sacred Feet, on the ground blessed by their pressure: no dash of hurrying brush has been there: less than a long day's light, from morn to dewy eve, did not suffice to give in individual shape and shade every minutest pebble and mote of that shore of Jordan. Every one of them was worth painting, for we are viewing them as in the light of His presence who made them and knew them all. And now let us pass to the other figures: to that living and glowing angelic group in the left-hand corner of the picture. Three of the heavenly host are present, variously affected by that which they behold. The first, next the spectator, in the corner of the picture, is standing in silent adora-

tion, tender and gentle in expression, the hands together, but only the points of the fingers touching, his very reverence being chastened by angelic modesty: the second turns on that which he sees a look of earnest inquiry, but kneels as he looks: and indeed that which he sees is one of the things which angels desire to look into. The third, a majestic herald-like figure, stands, as one speaking, looking at the spectator, with his right hand on his garment, and his left held out as in demonstration,—unmistakeably saying to us who look on, 'Behold what manner of love is here!' Then, hardly noticing what might well be much noticed, the grand dark figure of the Baptist on the right, let us observe, how beautifully and accurately all the features of the landscape are given—even, as has been well observed in a note to Sir C. Eastlake's edition of Kügler's Handbook of Painting, to the expression of the stratification and cleavage of the rocks in the foreground. Truly, our minutes spent before a picture like this are minutes of upward progress. We depart, and the scene itself passes from our memory: but the effect of tracing all these its attributes does not pass away, if it has been rightly done, but flows over and hallows our

conceptions of the blessed event, and of Him round whom all its interests are centered.

But, if *good* painting have this effect on those who do their duty by it, and even perhaps in lesser degree on all who pass by, what must not be the neutralising and degrading effect of *bad* painting—of those pictures of which these, and all churches on the Continent, are full! Look at this which we are passing at this moment—by some seventeenth century painter whose name we will not express, for fear of the infliction on us of an indignation correspondence by some one of his many admirers. A mass of reds and blues and sprawling limbs, it yet might have power of expression: it might *serve* a worthy idea, if it could not suggest one: but, with all desire to discover such power, we cannot find it here: each figure does its work on the canvas, but does it nowhere else. The painter never sought to comprehend the motive of his figures: he painted for money, hardly even perhaps for fame: he had his maxims and his models, and, in the rush downwards of the age in which he lived, he fell a little below both, as his scholars were sure to fall again a little below him. And so it went on, till all became vapid, and washed-out,

and having no life: so that a picture of an event in Redemption became simply a piece of furniture, and nothing more. Through all this degradation must the Roman Catholic mind have passed,—through it, and down the steepest passage which led yet further, before it could have begun to tolerate these abominable bespangled idols which disgust one now in most of their churches: before it could introduce all this trumpery which, even while we were contemplating Bellini's beautiful picture, was breaking its lines and blocking up its figures: these tinned wooden candlesticks doing duty for silver, these dusty paper flowers, and hideous prize-pigs of wooden cherubim, loaded with glazier's paint.

Really one may be excused for dwelling a little on the fact of the abominable taste which seems universal on the Continent, and disfigures, almost without exception, the finest churches. Rome itself is no exception: indeed it is the most flagrant example of the absence of taste. 'Enter any church on a great festival, or during a festival season, you shall find it hung with stripes of flaunting crimson silk or damask, its architecture hidden or intercepted,—a hundred tawdry and shabby pieces of

mock finery, pasteboard angels, glories made of planks of gilt deal, crowded on its altars.

At Verona, I had prepared our party for being delighted with the magnificent old church of San Zenone, which was vividly in my own remembrance after an absence of eighteen years. What was my disgust, on entering it with them, to find it all packed up in crimson silk lined with white, swathed round the noble pillars, and extending across the raised chancel so as entirely to hide the eastern apse! Besides this, lines of outrageous stage-properties formed avenues up the middle aisle, and were fixed against the pillars: and moveable altars were erected here and there in the space, decked in a taste which would have disgraced a dancing booth at a country fair. To do the sacristan justice, he protested loudly against all this: it was '*brutto, bruttissimo!*' it was to remain only three days longer, and then '*la bella chiesa*' would be seen in all its splendour.

But while speaking of Verona, I cannot help, on my part, protesting against another act of barbarism, which the Austrians are now perpetrating throughout the part of Italy where they unhappily continue masters. I mean, that of turning churches and cloisters into barracks, without the slightest regard

to the precious works of art contained in them. During one day at Verona, as before at Venice, several instances occurred of our being unable to see frescoes described as being very beautiful, because the buildings containing them had become military quarters or storehouses. I was naturally anxious to see an ancient church, dedicated to St. Thomas of Canterbury: thinking I might find there some representation, legendary or imaginative, of the murder perpetrated in my own cathedral. But I was told that I could not see the church, because it had been taken as a store of hay for the Austrian cavalry!

VIII.

HOMEWARD.

THE following notes of our passage over the Simplon are taken, not with a view of describing a route so well known, but with the purpose of recording the impressions made by the study of various natural objects as we passed them.

How enlivening and freshening is always the sight of rapidly rushing water! Here we come upon the Vedro, issuing from his mountain gorge into the broad valley below. The water, bright green, flashing into curved lines of purest white: the rocks of the gorge, deep purple, streaked with all varieties of accidental colour. Up their sides are sprinkled verdant ferns, and from their projections hang the long fresh trails of the bramble, beautiful always, but never so beautiful as when

its tender green leaflets are relieved against dark shades behind. Here and there, from a ledge, looks out the orange lily, the queen of southern Alpine flowers. Up that torrent we shall pass for many an hour.

A grand sight is a wilderness of tumbled rocks. First there is the thing seen: endless variety of shape, and tint of colour, and intensity of light, and depth of shadow: natural growths of wildest caprice, hoary lichen, and gilded moss, and tufted grass, and pinnated fern: nests of shelter, in which are framed nature's loveliest groups and tenderest younglings: and then add all the accessories—the soaring hill above; the gorge of final repose below: the wild and twisted trunks of stunted trees, which start black and weird from the chinks around: the interruptions of the blue sky above by the peaks and masses of towering stone: the thousand reverberations of sound from the surfaces. Then there is all that feeling, which may be described as the *soul*, of which natural sight and sound are the body: the awe in the presence of unknown power; the displacement, so to speak, of the mind's equilibrium, when the effect witnessed is palpable and present, but the cause to be surmised is distant, dreamy, and uncer-

tain. But other scenes are opening on us, and we must not waste our time in reflection.

Waterfalls. 'Impostures,' says one. 'Never go out of my way to see one,' says another: while to every recollection arises the unpleasant vision of importunate ciceroni, gates that must be unlocked, water that must be turned on, little smoking-boxes in the cockney summer-house style; even mirrors in the ceiling, in which you may see the law of gravity reversed. Still, odious as all these may be, they never would have been at all, were there not, as a cause for them all, a charm for mankind in the waterfall itself. I will not now examine into the nature of that charm; now that we are passing through some of the grandest scenes in nature: but will try to become a servant of that faculty in us which is thus charmed, by setting down some notes of waterfalls to-day.

Softly gliding down yonder face of rock, spread like a veil of finest lace, comes the first, unnamed and unvisited. That ledge no human foot ever trod, from which its timid descent is made. The eye dwells ever on its beauty. But for the ear it has no ministration. The sense of power at any rate is absent here. I am not sure that the mere fact of

similitude to beautiful human manufacture is not very much concerned in our admiration of such a waterfall as this. I am not sure whether the fact of the like similitude does not enter into our appreciations and criticisms of nature far more largely than we are apt to suspect.

Next onward in our catalogue shall be this cataract now falling over our heads from ledge to ledge of the dark wild rock, sporting into little stars of foam at every touch, and lacing the black intervals with its delicate vertical lines of white. Listen to its note—the treble of the great harmony around us: a soft light plash, heard only as we pass beneath, and then lost in the roar of the torrent below.

But now to that torrent itself, becoming momentarily too important and importunate to be any longer unnoticed. What majesty there is in that stately movement—what power in that march of waters! What harmony of effect in that mixture of mildness and vigour, of gentleness and roughness, of silence and sound, of deep colour and flashing foam! It ever seems to me that there is more grandeur in an upward reach of broken water like this, with its long-drawn lines of colour and endless harmonies of sound, than in the instanta-

neous plunge and pounding crash of the cataract itself. Much more interesting, for example, are those three miles on the Rhine below Schaffhausen, where its deep blue water leaps and struggles among opposing rocks, than the much-vaunted but disappointing fall, when reached.

Mountain trees. O the magnificence of these pines — living, whether tossing their great arms above us, rending the bright sky with the tracery of their tufted needles; or beneath, seen far down in the gorge, the tender green of the midsummer shoot creaming round their fan-like branches:—or dead, standing wan and white amongst the black chaos of rocks, forms of power and of terror:—or rooted up, and borne rolling down the torrent or the avalanche, to make desolation more desolate in the broken road or the inundated plain. Nor should it pass unmentioned, how the course of the torrent itself is ever and anon lighted up, in some gloomy chasm, by the bright colour of a fretted and lacerated mass of timber, which has become fastened against a projecting spur of rock, the sport of the plunging waters.

But the pines are not the only trees of the mountain. Of kindred growth, but tenderer green, the

larch mingles with the pine, or clothes whole cliffs with its more smiling verdure. No tree is more formal, and destructive of natural features, when artificially planted. Whole tracts of picturesque hill-country in Scotland and the North of England have been spoiled by the tasteless planting of great parallelograms of larch wood, running their hideous straight lines up the mountain sides. Wordsworth, in his Guide to the Lakes, complains that no number of larches ever mingle into one mass, but they stand bristling with their individual spikes, taking no grace of form or colour. And this is true; but its effect is as nothing here, where the grandeur of nature is so overpowering and all-including: not to mention, that when the tree grows in wild liberty, it takes more varied forms than when spindling up in an artificial plantation.

There is one spot, rising from Gondo towards its gorge, where the look back is worth recording. Beneath is of course the torrent, foaming downwards under black rocks carpeted above with tenderest green, and rising into a forest of red-stalked pines; and down a side valley, facing him who looks back, comes down, leap after leap, an impetuous torrent to meet the Vedro. High up,

buttress on buttress, are built the soaring rocks, with their vertical lines of weather-stain and horizontal terraces of turf; and above them glisten among the fleecy clouds the bare moist peaks of the summit, laced with silver veins of new fallen snow.

How glorious is this pine forest through which we are descending into the Valais! Huge twisted trunks, armed with limbs as gnarled and contorted as themselves, crossing and recrossing in endless mingling of curves and colours; and through them the rich glowing blue of the opposite mountain sides, or the vivid green of the valley below, or the glitter of the vagrant Rhone as he winds his way along it. And now we have changed, and gigantic spruce firs, each 'fit for the mast of some great ammiral,' shoot up into the sky their magnificent columns of pendent green.

Of Alpine flowers, something must always be said on a day like this. No one, who has not walked among high mountains, really knows the charm of wild flowers. There are parts of England, where a few species suffice to clothe the meadows and coppices in gay colours: our own Kent for instance, with its primroses and anemones, followed

by its bluebells, and campion, and foxgloves: but compared with the Flora of the Alps, ours is poor indeed. In the mountain valleys, we have every paddock of mowing grass bright with the purple salvia, and three-coloured polygala, white, pink, and blue, while thick in the undergrowth are all our English meadow flowers, larger in size and brighter in hue; orchises, speedwells, ranunculuses, scabious, red and purple; and the grasses themselves are far more various and beautiful than with us, glittering with tufts of feathery bloom. Then in every patch of corn we have the larkspur, and Venus's looking-glass, and the bright yellow pimpernel, and not unfrequently the graceful gladiolus, so that the spaces between the furrows often gleam with a lustre of continuous pink and blue. But all this is as nothing to the Alpine pastures. Anemones, red and golden and white, opening their vase-like blooms to the sun: columbines, tufted pink, or deep purple: monkshood, with its solemn green and its violet spikes of flowers; and then, as we mount higher, the ever lovely and ever welcome Alpine rhododendron, with its ferruginous leaf and bright rose-coloured flowers, lighting up whole tracts of mountain side, fringing the edges of

the terraced cliffs, and nestling even on the road-side banks for the delight of the passing traveller. But this is not all, nor near it. On these rocks as we look up, are saxifrages of all hues and sizes, clothing every chink with glaucous verdure: that gleam of delicate rose-coloured light, far up, is due to a colony of lovely pinks, fixed, as you will know if you climb for them as I have done, into the rock by an obstinate tap root, which you may sever but cannot extract. Near them, where all the shade seems touched with ultramarine, hundreds of minute campanula-bells are clustering amid their tiny delicate foliage. Nor can we omit mention, in passing, of the ferns which enrich these masses of rock and these road-side mountain walls. On the Simplon, to-day, I have not observed any whose names are not familiar to the most ordinary amateur; but of these, the abundance and the marvellous beauty have been a constant delight. The staple fern of rocks and walls in the lower Alpine valleys is the graceful Asplenium trichomanes; not, as with us, a minute star of stunted fronds, but clothing with its ample fringe whole masses of rock and masonry. As soon as the traveller loses this in his upward journey, all the Alpine ferns proper succeed to it:

the Polypodium, Phegopteris, Dryopteris, Calcareum, and the most elegant of them all, the Cistopteris fragilis. I need not add, for any observant traveller, that the mountain pastures, where they dip down to the bed of the torrent, stand thick with the fresh green fronds of the Oreopteris, giving out its pleasant scent as the foot brushes by it. One thing somewhat surprised me: that on the Simplon I did not anywhere see the parsley fern (Allosorus crispus), so common in other parts of the Alps, and on the shores of our English lakes, and clothing every wall and rocky knoll at Sorrento and Capri. To compensate for this disappointment, magnificent specimens of the Lonchitis, or holly-fern, occurred on our way up, and some are accompanying us to Canterbury.

But let us proceed with our flowers. Higher yet, we pass from those commonly known by the general name of Alpine, to those which are really and exclusively indigenous on mountain heights. First of all these, the lovely gentians, spotting the moist track of the melting snow with stars of intensest blue: not the large bell-flower so named, though that is grand in form and colour, and abounds here likewise: but the smaller and flatter, deeper in

colour, and lying close to the ground; and, as we first learned during a memorable day on the Faulhorn, another, even smaller again and closer still to the ground, and deeper yet in indescribable intensity of colour. These first: and then the little clustered Alpine primula or auricula, of the colour of the pale damask rose, populous on the spongy bank and yielding hillock: giving up easily to the hand its roots amply furnished with protecting earth, but, as I have known by repeated trial, most difficult of culture at home. Nay, this is more or less true of all Alpine plants: they may, after careful transport, and with due observance of their wild habits, survive, and even bloom, for a year or two: but we cannot create a climate for them; and gradually, under the adverse influence of our air, they degenerate, and finally die. Among the gentians and primulas, are usually found the moisture-loving little pinguicula, with its delicate lilac flower, digitalis like, depending gracefully from its inclining stem; and the Soldanella Alpina, beautifully fringed, and deep violet purple in colour. Pansies too abound, yellow, and purple; the latter generally choosing for themselves some shelving nook, and there pouring their multitudes profusely, to the exclusion of every

other flower. I made an expedition from the carriage-road up to one such rich nest of purple, expecting gentians; and found my more plebeian friends the pansies in full possession.

And now let us altogether change the scene.

Here we are this lovely summer morning, rushing, with all the rattle and shackle of a French express train, over the flats between Paris and Calais. Unloveliest of countries, broken by innumerable scraggy poplars, so that it has none of the majesty of the dead level: unenlivened by villages in their tufts of trees; without graceful spires or venerable towers: on which it is absolutely impossible to look long at a time, for want of any feature of form or colour: yet in the eyes of English travellers not unlovely, after all: for through it lies the road home—on its dull morning monotony breaks, before day is done, the glorious sun of England. And now let me give scope awhile to thoughts of this complexion; let me talk of home as seen from foreign travel: and of foreign travel as contemplated in the light of home. I shall have, it may be, to mingle things that sound strangely together, and to pass sometimes abruptly from grave to gay, from tender to severe. Never mind.

Nor again shall it disturb me, that I may be incurring the imputation of setting down a panegyric on my native land. If my estimate of that of which I treat be a fair one, arrived at in no prejudiced spirit, and based on matters of fact, its result is matter of indifference. They were no mean men, whose motto it was, as the poet of Pharsalia has told us, 'Causas, non fata, sequi:' to be led by principles, not by the issues of principles. The question for fair-judging readers is, not whether my remarks amount to a panegyric, but whether that panegyric is justified by fact.

I remember, when first travelling on the Continent in 1837, to have seen in the 'strangers' book,' somewhere far removed from England, the following curious entry: 'For aught I see as yet, foreigners are fools.'[1] Now in using these general terms, of course the writer was wrong. We all know, that foreigners are anything but fools: nay, that they are, in many important matters, far wiser than ourselves. And I am willing to think, that he knew this likewise; and did not use the term generally, but

[1] The original of this expression was the saying of Hugo Meynell, of Derbyshire notoriety. *Vide* Boswell's 'Johnson,' vol. III., ch. i.

only of the matters which as a traveller were nearest to his thoughts. He was not thinking of empire, nor of art, nor of commerce; but rather of those ordinary matters in daily life, which require the application of ready common sense: of that faculty, so peculiarly requisite in all who have to do with the wants and convenience of others, which we know by the unexplainable name of *gumption*: the knowing what is wanted, and what is not wanted, on a given emergency: the so governing, as not to restrict: so leading, as not to impede: so inventing, as not to neutralise the advantage contemplated: so putting out of hand, as equally to provide the greatest facility for working well. In all this, our friend pronounced, that, for aught he saw as yet,—after he had gone some thousand miles or so,—foreigners were fools. And our friend was right. He might have multiplied his thousand miles an hundredfold, and have stood by his first conclusion.

Since he wrote the words, great improvements have been made in every foreign country whither we English resort. In the first place, our great locomotive invention has spread over them, bringing with it more civilization, and, even by reason of the present rapidity of motion, diminishing the frequency

and duration of occasions of discomfort. But perhaps we are prone to attribute to railways more of the improvement in foreign countries than is due to them. This improvement has spread almost as much where railways are as yet unknown. There is one cause of it, operating far more widely and surely than the extension of railways: namely, the presence, and the demands, of English travellers. Where they are in the habit of going, it is present: where they are not known, it is absent. Go quite off the frequented roads in any part of the Continent even now, and you will find that the most ordinary comforts and decencies of life are unknown. On your arrival, the first demand for them has occurred: after you are gone, if the natives are wise, your demand is remembered, and improvement takes place for the future. And thus, in the more frequented parts, the habit of serving others leads by degrees to the introduction of comfort and elegance into the lives of the people themselves. To intercourse with us, the great nations of Europe owe, as matter of fact, the advance in the proprieties and appliances of life which has taken place of late years.

I have mentioned railways first: let us take from them our first example of this position which I am

laying down. The continent of Europe is now pretty generally intersected by railways, and as far as one can see, there is no reason why the comfort and convenience of the public should not be as completely served by them there as they are served by them in England.

Let us see how the matter really stands. I will suppose a family which contains ladies and children, arriving at a foreign railway station with the intent to take the train. If they have luggage, it is always impressed upon them that they must be there at least half an hour before the train is expected. On arriving, they are shown into a large outer hall, generally without seats, in which are situated the booking and baggage offices. The words *Salles d'Attente*, over a door in a corner, inform them that *there are* waiting rooms. But in order to be allowed to enter these waiting rooms, they must have their tickets to show; and the windows of the booking office are not yet opened. When they *are* opened, one of those stultifications takes place which seem to beset all foreign arrangements. The gentleman of the party, or the courier, when he has made his way, with considerable difficulty, to the official at the window, and obtained

the tickets, has then to go to the baggage office, and, again awaiting his turn among the multitude, to show them there, that it may be seen to how many passengers the luggage belongs; the principle being never to take any one's word. They are taken and stamped with the word '*Bagages*,' that it may be seen that they have been taken into account in weighing the luggage. Meantime, the baggage ticket is being slowly written, slowly torn off, slowly sprinkled with sand, deliberately given out from the window. And all this while the unfortunate ladies and children have been standing, or sitting on their hand-bags and wraps on the filthy floor, subject to the rude brushing of the passers-by, and the puffing of smoke into their faces; or if they venture to appeal to an official for a seat, or for admission into the waiting-room, rebuffed with insolence. To this I have known some exceptions. I have even got my party admitted without tickets; but it was contrary to express orders, and to almost invariable custom.

Well, at last the tickets are set free, and, presenting them to the official who stands with a pair of nippers at the door of the *salles d'attente*, the party enter. And now comes the worst trial of the

whole. Let us describe these *salles d'attente.* The common plan in the large stations is, to divide a vast hall into three pens, separated by partitions about breast high, and opening into a passage running along the length of the hall. These are for first, second, and third class passengers. Into these they are shut until the train has arrived and is ready for them. Most of the halls containing these rooms are entirely without ventilation. When they are large, the inconvenience is not great, unless it be occasionally in spring or autumn, when the already warm air is rendered suffocating by the radiation of the iron stoves. But in the smaller stations, it is sometimes hardly possible to breathe. A glass door opens on the platform, and is rigidly fastened. Against this door the stronger members of the penned-up multitude take their station, ready to rush out the moment it is opened: the ladies (who are never favoured with precedence on such occasions by foreigners) and the weaker ones being thrown into the background. At length the train arrives; and after the quota of passengers for that town is disgorged, an official opens the waiting-room doors. Then follows a rush at the carriages. The young and strong, and the natives, are in a moment

in possession of all the best places: ladies, and invalids, are seen wandering up and down the platform, not knowing where to find room: families are divided, most commonly with uncivil words, and sometimes even with rough treatment.

This feature in the foreign railway management is most repulsive to the feelings of Englishmen: and let me add, does as much to verify the entry of our friend in the strangers' book as anything he could witness on the Continent. In the case of feeble and nervous persons, and of invalids, it amounts to a positive prohibition on travelling, or to the risk of serious injury. I once brought a member of my family, who was weak after a severe illness, from the South of France to England. Nothing could be more distressing than the trials and annoyances to which she was obliged to submit owing to this absurd system of locking the passengers into the waiting-room. Fortunately, one among us was young and strong: and our plan was that he should always post himself against the waiting-room door, rush out first, and fight his way to the best corner he could get, and then resign it to the invalid. But imagine the practical wisdom, and the courtesy of a people where this was the

only resource! Again and again, at the beginning of our journey, we appealed to officials, but to no purpose—all, they told us, must fare alike. This was in 1855: it is now 1864, and the same stupid regulation continues in force. A French imperial commission has recommended, among other improvements in the management of the railways, that the platforms be left free as in England; but the companies are understood to have replied, that in that case they would not be answerable for the lives of the public!

The slavery to minute regulations in which foreigners are held, is a source of continual annoyance to the English traveller, who is accustomed to be guided, and to see others guided, by the rule of common sense, and the apparent exigences of the moment. I remember entering a train at the Genoa terminus, on a broiling hot day in the spring of 1861. The carriage, previously to being used, had been left exposed to the sun; and in consequence the inside was perfectly stifling. Our party had seated themselves, and were getting faint with the excessive heat, when the door opened, and a porter appeared with two large hot-water tins for foot-warmers. This was more than we could endure.

First we protested, then we endeavoured to keep out the intruder: but all to no purpose: we only brought down upon us the staff of authorities, who with very grave and angry words informed us that the regulation was that the foot-warmers were to be placed in the carriages up to a certain day, be the weather what it might. At last, by a threat of throwing the calorifères out of window after the train had started, we prevailed thus far, that the hot water was emptied out of them: but we were not relieved of their presence.

The absurd and utterly useless passport regulations are now, mainly owing to the good sense of a sovereign who has been long resident in England, beginning to be very generally modified for the better. In all States which make any pretension to advancement in civilization, the necessity for being furnished with a passport is already done away. That Prussia should have very recently made a public announcement of that necessity still existing, is no more than might have been expected from the retrograde course towards aggression and despotism on which she has chosen to enter. We travelled from our own door in England through France and Italy, to the Papal frontier, without even being

reminded that we had a passport with us. The hated sound was first heard at Monte Fiascone, from the Gendarmeria Ponteficia: next, when we re-entered the territory of the clergyman-king at Ceprano on our return from Naples: and for the third and last time, when we were allowed to tread the Austrian bank of the Po, at Ponte Lagoscuro, between Ferrara and Padua.

I called the passport system utterly useless: and so it is. It annoys the harmless traveller, and entirely fails to stop the dangerous intruder. Any one may obtain in England a passport under a false name, or indeed as many passports as he pleases: any number of interchanges of passports may be made by persons in league with one another. To track any given person by his passport would be simply impossible, except in the case of *bonâ fide* travellers, whom it would not be worth while to track. The system is kept up partly for the fees which it yields, but more through a dogged spirit of stolid conservatism, determined not to recognise the necessities of the altered times in which we live.

In the hands indeed of a despotism, the passport laws are a most formidable means of oppressing its own subjects. At Rome, for instance, as I have

already noticed in these letters, the granting of a passport, without which no one can leave the Papal States, or indeed the place of his residence, is made to depend on the priest's certificate of his having received the sacrament at the last Easter. And even then, the unfortunate applicant is sometimes so bandied about from one authority to another, or kept waiting from time to time, that, before the passport can be obtained, the occasion for his journey has passed away.

Another continual source of annoyance to the traveller is the institution known throughout the Continent as the *Octroi.* A duty is levied at the entrance of towns and villages on provisions brought in for sale. At every entrance is a toll-house, the Bureau de l'Octroi. At this toll-house, every carriage is supposed to be stopped and examined. At some places, even on returning from a drive, the demand is made whether one has *anything to declare:* and the busy hands of the official are thrust hither and thither about the carriage. I have known this done with great incivility and rudeness. On one occasion we entered the town of Montpelier in a carriage, one window of which we had been obliged, from its shutting imperfectly, to tie up with

wine, a strong keen north wind blowing at the time. Unfortunately our tied-up window was the one next the Bureau d'Octroi. On the official turning the handle of the door and not obtaining admission, he became furious: and as we were in vain attempting to untie the knot, and begging him to go to the other side, he tore down and smashed our window, and imprecated it and us as he mounted into the carriage.

But by far the greatest annoyance from the octroi is inflicted on arriving by railway at great cities. Take but one example out of many. The night train from Lyons to Paris, if punctual, gives just time to traverse the city and reach the day train for London. One would think that every effort would be made to expedite the traveller and enable him to accomplish this. Will it be believed by any one who has been at an English terminus under similar circumstances, that so far from this being the case, all the passengers are compelled to enter a large saloon, and to stand crowding about a door at the end of it till the whole of the luggage is brought in: then to produce their keys, not for real examination of any single box or bag, but for the ridiculous farce of opening one or two of

each person's packages, and shutting them again. Literally this is all that happens: and very frequently indeed, some of the passengers lose the train to England by this absurd piece of nonsense.

The excuse commonly given is, that the octroi is of the utmost consequence to the towns: that from it are derived the municipal funds, out of which the cost of improvements is defrayed. The city of Paris is by means of the octroi enabled to carry out all those magnificent extensions and decorations which are making it the wonder of the world. Let all this be granted: but surely some method might be devised by which at least the 'through' traveller might be exempted from the necessity of delay, even were the search as much a reality as it is at present a farce. Booking through would obviate it; or if this could not be done where the stations are distant, the mere plombing the luggage would allow it to go through without being 'visited.' But the truth is, the petty authorities of the foreign cities do not conceive that their dignity is sufficiently consulted unless they are allowed to annoy travellers as much as they please. It was a just remark, by whomsoever made, that in England,

the institutions are made for the people; but abroad, the people seem made for the institutions. Everything is interfered with, complicated, worried down, by a parcel of unmeaning rules and forms, made and kept up without an approach to a thought whether they would be better for the public.

One more illustration of our friend's entry in the strangers' book. It once befel me to be stranded in a steamer, owing to a gross piece of carelessness on the part of the captain and helmsman, for a day and a night in the middle of the Rhine. It was in that wide flat-country reach of the river which extends many miles north of Strasbourg. Another boat, in passing which we had run aground, carried the news to that station, and in a few hours two steamers were sent to get us off. The method adopted was this: two ropes were payed out, one from each vessel; one was attached to our bow, and the other to our stern. Then came the pull which was to bring our rescue. But as surely as the pull came, so surely did first one rope break, and then another. And this was repeated again and again for hours together. There were four of us, Cambridge men, on board. We went to the captain, and represented to him that it would be worth while to try knotting

the two ropes together and attaching them both to our bows. But we were met with a rebuff, and told that when he wanted our advice, he would ask for it. And so the farce went on, till at each failure, the passengers broke into shouts of laughter, and even some hisses were heard, and untoward designations of the captain and crew. Then, at last, the plan which had been obvious at first was adopted; and the result was, that at the very first pull from one steamer only, we moved off triumphantly.

But here are the well-known flats, and the castellated church tower, and the tall red lighthouse, which tell us that Calais is reached. And here too is the inevitable whistle of the stirring breeze, notwithstanding that all has been still since we left Paris. And there are the white horses chasing one another over the Channel, as it seems to me they have never ceased to do since the chalky plain was first submerged.

And now we are plunging through the waves, crushing them with a crisp sound, and raising sheets of spray, which fall splashing over our bows. Green and beautiful are the hills and valleys of the restless water, fresh and sweet the air as it meets us from

England. And ever clearer and whiter in the distance rise the barrier cliffs; and now we can make out the towers of the castle, and the underlying houses of Dover; and twenty-three minutes beyond, thanks to our excellent new railway, rise certain other stately towers, and under them a certain old rambling, gabled, and wainscoted house, buried in its darkening lime-trees.

So, gentle reader, farewell. If these letters have pleasantly beguiled a spare hour, have awakened any love for art, have made thine heart beat with indignation at sanctioned wrong, have recalled grateful memories, or suggested glad anticipations, our wish has been accomplished, and our labour rewarded.

POSTSCRIPT ON THE FRANCO-ITALIAN CONVENTION.

SINCE these letters were written, a wonderful meteor has shot across the sky of Italy. There can be no doubt that the French Emperor has long been weary of the 'situation' at Rome. His position there has been a most awkward corollary from his policy at home. The one is repressive in the name of justice and liberty: the other, repressive to uphold monstrous injustice and the enemies of all human rights. If he makes fair speeches in France, the world has but to look to Rome for their interpretation, and few will be deceived by them. Add to this, that he has found the insolence of his priestly *protégés* past bearing any longer: that he wants his army for other purposes: that the irksomeness of the duty at Rome, and the inconsistency of the occupation with what Frenchmen feel and express, keeps ever alive a festering unpopularity for him at home. But, on the other

hand, it is equally manifest that he dares not withdraw his troops. Should the Head of the Church be left in peril, even moderate Catholics would become staunch Papists, and the Emperor would soon find a crusade mustered against him. It may be, too, that the rumours of personal danger arising from the priestly party are not altogether ineffective, even in the mind of one who is understood to be a fatalist. In this dilemma, the Emperor has thrown out this pilot-balloon of the Convention, to ascertain how the currents lie.

In the uncertainty as to what is in store for the parties concerned in it, some speculation may be permitted, founded on already existing symptoms.

It may be assumed, that Italy will go to Florence for its capital, and that so much of the convention will be fulfilled. It is, perhaps, all that ever will be. But, even if this be so, it is a great step in advance. A great step, not towards Rome as an ultimate capital, but towards the gradual improvement and winning over of Rome. In a few months, one day will suffice for the journey from Rome to Florence. It will be too hard even for '*non possumus*' to hinder the opening of the railway. And it is material improvement, far more than any

line of adverse policy, that is the enemy of the Papal system. Every train that enters Rome, shortens the duration of the present disgraceful state of things. In proportion as the light of public opinion is let in on him, the Pope must either gradually improve, or be gradually undermined. His spiritual position would not be weakened, but strengthened, by his becoming a just and virtuous ruler, if this indeed were possible in his anomalous position of clergyman-king. But his spiritual position would then first become what his best and most moderate friends could wish it, if his temporal power were by him voluntarily abandoned.

As regards the matter of fact, it will be the same whether the abandonment be voluntary or involuntary: sooner or later, with advancing light, and increasing communication with a free country, the temporal priestly power must come to an end, and Rome must become an Italian city. There may be infinite difficulties and hindrances in the way. France seems, by the latest accounts, to be storing up trouble for the nascent freedom of the Romans: for it is given out that she means to have the disposal of the city, should the Pope's temporal power come to an end. But France is not always

to be calculated on; and turns of events may come which may strangely modify this threatened peril.

Meantime, '*non possumus*' has checkmated the Emperor. Says France, 'Time shall be given the Holy Father to provide himself with sufficient means of defence and government.' Says the Pope, 'I shall do nothing of the kind. My weakness is my strength. Not a man will I enlist, not a rifle will I lay in: I stand here defenceless, and I defy you to desert me.'

So that the change to Florence is all that can at present be calculated on.

Let us say a few words on this, looked at from the Italian side.

Surely every sober-minded friend to Italy must wish that Florence may remain the permanent capital. The veteran General Cialdini has pointed out, in his remarkable speech, the immense advantages, in a military point of view, which it has over Turin. To an impartial reader of that speech at a distance, it seems as if almost every one of his arguments would tell with even greater force against Rome.

Besides, it seems to me that any one who knows Rome at all, must also know that it is totally un-

fitted for the working capital of a populous nation. Recall to mind any such capitals, and say what is the very first requisite, looking on to future greatness and prosperity? Is it not, the power of expansion? And what known city possesses this so little as Rome? In almost every direction, even before reaching Aurelian's walls, malaria is encountered. Until the enigma of its prevention is solved, the fairest spots in the highest quarter of Rome must remain untenanted. The Villa Volkonsky, with its beautiful garden, made more interesting by the ruined aqueduct which crosses it, stands on the high ground between St. John Lateran and the Porta Maggiore. From the grounds, the eye ranges on one side over the wide Campagna to the glorious hills, and on the other looks down, under the spreading fans of a fine young palm, over the Villa Altieri, with its spreading pine, across the valley to the Esquiline, crowned by S. Maria Maggiore, and farther still, to St. Peter's, and Monte Mario rising behind the cupola. This villa, with all its appurtenances, was last winter for sale, for a sum that would hardly buy a cottage at an English watering-place. Need I say why? The monster, Pestilence, was in possession: and the man who should

become the purchaser would be barred out of his house for whole months in the year.

And outside the ancient walls, is it any better? Nay, it is infinitely worse. Ask the wretched monks who are on duty during the summer at the great basilica of St. Paul, or, worse still, at the churches of the Tre Fontane, two miles further out, off the road to Ostia. They will tell you, as they told me, that it is with the utmost difficulty they can remain long enough to perform the service: that if a man has to dig in his field, he works with all his might till he begins to feel drowsy, and then flies, with hot haste, back to Rome. Is this the country for miles on miles of suburban villages? Is that place fit for a capital, where, if the Parliament were summoned on an emergency in the month of August, it would be with peril to the lives of its members? Then again, what ample streets, what public places, has modern Rome, in which to receive great armies and exhibit pageants? Her main street, the Corso, is not wider than Holborn in the narrowest strait at Middle Row, or the Strand south of St. Mary's Church. Its piazzas have, indeed, a charm and a majesty of their own: and any adaptation of them, or of the streets, to the exigencies of a modern capital, would simply

ruin the city. I do hope and trust that the Italians will let Rome alone, as far as any such adaptation is concerned. Let them gain it: let them reform it: let them (it is easy, without interfering with its peculiar character) improve it as a city for 200,000 persons to dwell in: but let them abstain from the Vandalism of adapting it to the wants of a modern capital. It is already the capital of the world's history: the centre of interest, to whatever age we look, and whatever department of human affairs. And there may it be left: the Rome of the stern old republic, the Rome of the Cæsars, the Rome of the Popes, the Rome of every traveller's desire, the Rome whose place in memory never becomes dim.

Now turn to Florence. No contrast can be greater than the view from any elevated spot near Rome, and that from Bellosguardo, or San Miniato, or Fiesole. From the former, the wide Campagna, with scarcely a human habitation: from the latter, a rich valley, studded with glittering houses and hamlets, thick as stars. Florence has but to fill in these spaces, if need be, which hardly separate white villa from villa, and it might contain millions. No fear here of devastating malaria: no spots charming the eye but pregnant with insidious fevers. Heat, if

you will, in summer: and enough of it: and it must be confessed, winter's cold such as no Roman tramontane can equal: but these are endurable—nay, are even luxuries of vicissitude, compared with the deadly Foe, lurking in the ground, or the air, or the water, or no one knows where.

Florence too has its peculiar charms, and cherished memories: but there is no reason why its becoming the new capital should destroy them: rather may it, if Italy be wise, continue and enhance them. Florence does not, as Rome, belong to all mankind's history. Dante does, Michael Angelo does, Savonarola does, Fra Angelico does, Leonardo de Vinci does: but the city, as a city, does not. The capital, with all its stir of life, may go on and flourish, but Giotto's grim portrait of Dante need not be effaced from the walls of the Bargello;—the frescoes of Fra Angelico may still delight the visitor to San Mario, and he may still copy the inscription over the chamber of Savonarola;—from the Sasso di Dante he may continue to contemplate Brunelleschi's dome and Giotto's glorious campanile: and Italians will not take less, but more pride in the Casa Buonarotti, with all its memories of him, 'qui genus humanum ingenio superavit.' Then we may hope that Ghi-

berti's marvellous gates will look no longer on the rough mortar of the unfinished cathedral, but on a façade worthy of themselves, rich with the gathered marbles of Italy, and fretted with her noblest sculptures.

So let us end with wishing well to Italy in her new capital, and for that capital itself uttering the prayer, '*Esto perpetua!*'

00060473

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 02 July, 2018